CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

The Beaver

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Chasing Whales

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The Beaver

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The Beaver
CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

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The Famous Six?

It would be sweet if Lizzie Cyr (Waters) was indeed the person behind the Persons Case [October/November 2004]. Ah, the romance of it! An indigent Métis prostitute becoming the first lady of Canadian women's liberation (and, *sotto voce*, upstaging those comfortable upper-class white women, the Famous Five). Almost as heady and alluring as if Louis Riel were to be recognized as a true Father (parent?) of Confederation, coming, as it were, from outside the tent. Alas, on the face of the Persons Case, both at the Supreme Court of Canada and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, it seems that Lizzie Cyr was not even considered, let alone a precedent. No, for all the merit of the wonderful and progressive decision of Mr. Justice Stuart in the Alberta Court of Appeal decision (*Rex* v. *Cyr* (1917) 38 DLR 601), Lizzie was ignored. No place in the lamentable (or worse!) unanimous decision of the Supreme Court of Canada or that of the Privy Council is there the slightest mention of Lizzie and her lot. Despite a wide scope meander scouting the margins in English law on keeping women in their place, there is not a peep from the courts about Lizzie.

Why would that be? With nearly overwhelming certainty, at least some of the Famous Five well knew the case and its implications for the cause. Was it a decision of the lawyers not to advance a case from a parochial appeals court, regardless of merit? Was it the courts themselves who chucked it into holding? Was it by negligence or design? Was the omission reflective of a contempt for the precedent, the Alberta Court of Appeal, the new Wild West, the Métis, or the social/economic conditions and circumstances of Lizzie? That might be an interesting inquiry. For me, I think of *Rex* v. *Cyr* and Lizzie as the person who should have been "The Person Behind the Persons Case," thus making the Famous Five the Famous Six.

NORMAN CONRAD
COWICHAN BAY, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Cold War memories

The recent article "Bombs in the Bush" [December 2004 / January 2005] and the picture of the Goose Air Base maintenance hangars for B-36 Peacemaker heavy bombers triggered a recollection of a somewhat similar base for the U.S. Strategic Air Command that I was involved in at Frobisher Bay (now Iqaluit) in 1959. Our client was actually Canada's Department of National Defence. The Cold War was on!

At the time, I was chief field engineer for contractor C.A. Pitts, who gained the contract to build airmen's quarters, library, dam, powerhouse, two maintenance hangars for B-52 bombers, petroleum, oil, lubrication (P.O.L.), and other facilities. Simultaneously, Carter Construction was extending the existing runway to two miles to service the B-52 bombers. Just before the upcoming dawn of the commercial jet age, we could see huge Canadian Pacific propeller-driven aircraft, such as *Empress of Australia*, and *Empress of Japan*, coming in to land and refuel en route to Europe on their transpolar flights.

Readers may be interested to learn that the long runway at Iqaluit is an alternate landing strip for the U.S. space shuttle.

G. JAMES THOMSON, P.ENG.
OAKVILLE, ONTARIO

Falling trees

The letter from Olden Paris [October/November 2004], entitled "Sticky business," falls somewhat off the mark. Firstly, the men standing on springboards are "fallers," not "sawyers." Sawyers worked in sawmills, and before automation ran the carriages moving the logs lengthwise through large circular saws, selecting the best cuts to maximize the number of planks and timbers that could be sawn from each log. My dad was one. Secondly, there are several reasons for falling trees from springboards, the very least of which were pitch pockets. Chiefly, it was to avoid having to work from steep and uneven ground in thick and tangled undergrowth. Notches could be cut in the tree trunk to mount the springboards at the same level to create an even, firm, and safe footing to work from. It also cleared the characteristic but undesirable (for lumber) flared, tough, wiry-grained butt of large old first-growth Douglas fir. The tree six to eight feet above the butt usually had an even diameter with straight

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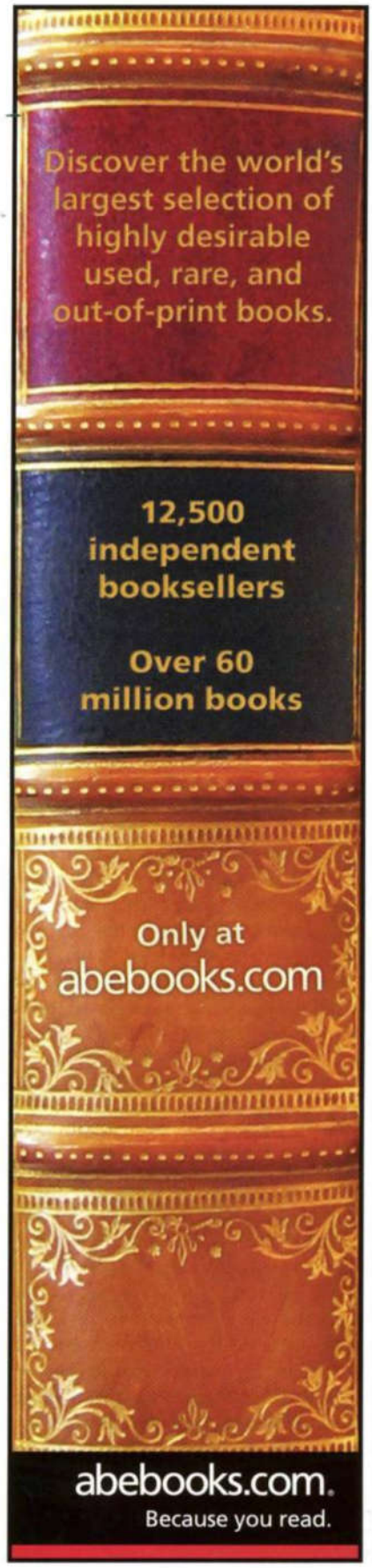
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grain and little or no taper for fifty feet or more. While I did fall trees for a summer from springboards, what I most remember was the hard work having to split those butts for firewood that had been bucked off and discarded from trees fallen with the newly introduced chainsaws. There was some pitch, but far from a hogshead of it.

CLIVE L. JUSTICE
VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Web voyage

Liz Maxwell's article "Arctic Passage" on page 52 of the December 2004 issue mentions the *Labrador*'s 1954 rescue of the *Monte Carlo*. The story of the voyage of the *Monte Carlo*, with its crew from Boston College, is told at <http://www.bc.edu/publications/bcm/fall_2000/ft_linehan.html>.

JOHN GILBERT
OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Brock in Quebec

I read with interest your article in the October/November 2004 issue, as well as a recent book published on Sir Isaac Brock. While I was still residing in Trois-Rivières, Quebec, in the mid-1980s, I came upon an article on Sir Isaac Brock containing information I have not seen in any other publication. (Unfortunately, I no longer have the paper nor the bulletin, but I believe it was published by the Société d'histoire de Trois-Rivières.) It mentioned that Brock had spent time in Trois-Rivières on more than one occasion, where he visited his sister, who was married to the Anglican minister assigned to St. James Anglican Church around that period. This church is located in the oldest part of T-R, at 811, rue des Ursulines. I hope this leads to more facts pertaining to Brock's years in Canada.

JOHANNE-LOUISE GIROUX
HAMILTON, ONTARIO

ERRATA On p. 9 of the December 2004 / January 2005 issue, it was stated that Canadian soldiers landed at Pachino on July 19, 1943. In fact they landed July 10.

On p. 27, it was stated that the *Winnipeg Telegram* was taken over by the *Winnipeg Free Press*. In fact, it was bought by the *Winnipeg Tribune* in October 1920.

More Letters The *Beaver* website offers a new section for letters to the editor. To see letters that may only be available online, go to <www.thebeaver.ca>, and click on "Extra! Extra!" to get to the "Letterbox" section.

COURTESY GRAHAM CHANDLER

Trail horses at Ya Ha Tinda Ranch

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

End of the Trail

The two tots romping in the dry grass seem unconcerned with the biting December wind blasting off Alberta's foothills west of Sundre. Quill and Quigley have no idea but they're the last of a long line of backcountry trail horses born and bred here at Parks Canada's Ya Ha Tinda Ranch.

In a cost-cutting move, Parks Canada has decided to buy ready-broken horses instead of breeding their own – breaking a tradition that goes back eighty-seven years.

"They are my last two babies," says ranch foreman Rick Smith. "These are our Qs." Smith is referring to a naming tradition that harks back to the 1930s, revealed in a well-thumbed horse register kept at the ranch in a 1918 cabin. Colts born on the ranch each year have been given names according to an alphabetic sequence: 2004 colts are all named with Qs.

The federal government created the spectacular 3,945-hectare ranch bordering the Red Deer River in 1917 by not renewing the local Brewster family's grazing lease. The natural grasslands, clear of snow most of the winter and adjacent to Rocky Mountain (now Banff) National Park, were seen as ideal for breeding, training, and wintering Parks horses. While breeding will cease, training and wintering the more than a hundred horses will continue, along with advanced park warden training.

But bloodlines will change. Ya Ha Tinda Ranch always kept its own stud horse, which varied according to each manager's favourite at replacement time – one liked Morgans, for instance, and another quarter horses.

Starting in 2005, Smith and the barn bosses – who run the horse barns for national parks in Alberta and British Columbia during the active season – will look for six to eight four- or five-year-olds with "good round bone, solid feet, nice withers, nice dish for the saddle," he

MIKE THOMAS

says. Smith says at current prices, they'll be paying $2,000 to $2,500 for a "decent broke horse."

The new mounts likely won't be accustomed to backcountry trail life. Bought horses will need to be taught "how to be hobbled, how to deal with bears, cougars etc.," says Smith.

He figures the decision to buy will save feeding about forty horses a year – twelve mares have twelve colts, which are kept around for two years each. The ranch's annual hay budget is $33,000, even though the horses graze nearly all winter.

Which means cost savings will be significant, but "it'll be hard not to have colts around to play with," says Smith. Quill and Quigley would surely agree. —Graham Chandler

LIVING HISTORY

"Yukon history makes me tick," insists Jim Robb, a Quebec-born artist who has made the territory his home (and artistic inspiration) for almost fifty years. Moved by the people and

places of the north, Robb has committed his life's work to recording the Yukon's history and culture from the gold rush to the present. Focusing on historical buildings and unusual residents, Robb paints and photographs what he considers a quickly disappearing past.

Robb grew up in Montreal, where he often skipped high-school classes to observe the people and buildings in the poorer districts of Old Montreal, an area of the city he found fascinating. In search of other out-of-the-way corners of the world, and inspired by a Robert Service poem about the Yukon, Robb ventured north. Immediately enthralled, he made Whitehorse his permanent home and its history his artistic subject matter.

Robb was quick to notice that the preservation of local historical buildings and artifacts was being threatened by modernization, and wanted to record such things before they were gone. In his early years in Whitehorse, Robb sketched and painted an area of downtown known as Whisky Flats, a series of tarpaper shacks and clapboard cabins. Since then, the people and buildings of Whisky Flats have disappeared.

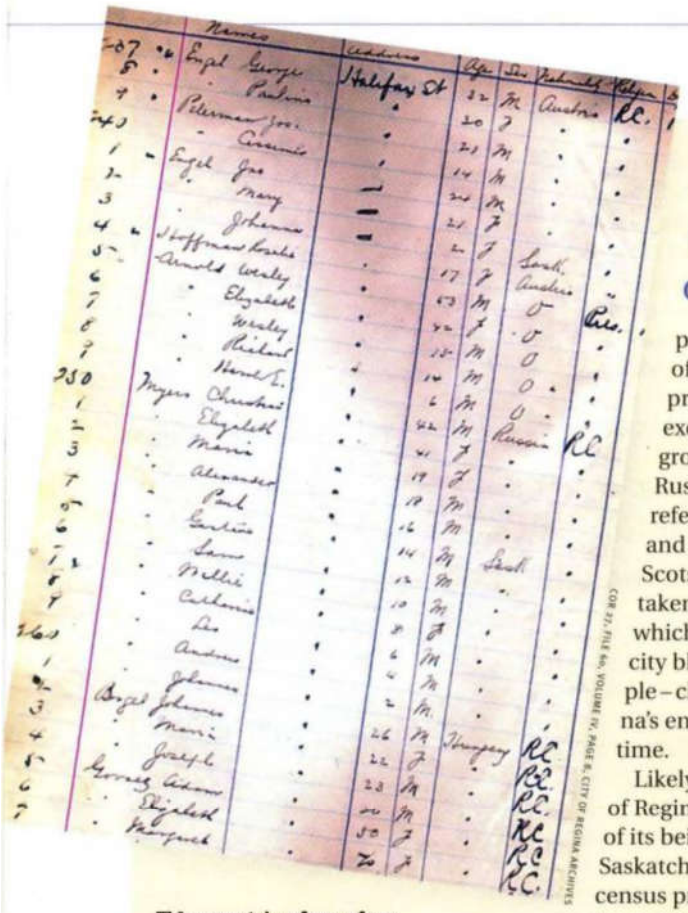
Robb has also documented the human characters of the Yukon for the sake of history. But these characters don't necessarily represent the general population of the region. Instead, Robb draws from a very specific subject base – what he calls "the colourful 5 percent." "I'm only interested in the part of the northwest's population that I think is unique," he explains. And this uniqueness, according to Robb, often stems from a combination of offbeat personalities, backgrounds, looks, and philosophies. In this category fell Robb's first human subject, Wigwam Harry, a local man living in a discarded piano crate. Harry was a colourful character who loved to dance and perform sleight-of-hand tricks. He's also known for a job he once he completed: he spent three days digging out a basement, and when his employer was slow in paying him, promptly filled it in again. Robb created a larger-than-life painting of him. "I think it's important to record the interesting people so we can have that heritage to look back on in the future."

The large size of the Wigwam Harry painting (which had to be tilted sideways to pass through doors) was only the beginning of what would become Robb's distinctive style. His paintings have a whimsical, animated feel – a style he describes as "the exaggerated truth." Leaning chimneys lean a little further than usual, and rusty parts are made to look rustier. He says he does this to make the important elements of his subjects stand out.

Yet another of Robb's projects is a publication that features his paintings, sketches, photographs, and stories of Yukon history and folklore. Called *The Colourful Five Per Cent Illustrated*, the magazine is currently in its fourth issue, and Robb hopes to adapt it for television.

Yukon artist Jim Robb chronicles what he calls "the colourful 5 percent."

Full Moon Over Whisky Flats **(inset). The area of Whitehorse depicted here no longer exists.**



COR 37, FILE 60, VOLUME IV, PAGE 8, CITY OF REGINA ARCHIVES

This page, taken from a four-volume census, details the immigrant population of Regina at the beginning of the twentieth century. Countries of origin include Austria, Hungary, and Russia. Some of the children were born in Saskatchewan. Single ticks and "O's" are used to indicate "the same as above."

PAPER TRAIL

The area of Regina known as "Germantown" ran from Osler Street to Winnipeg Street, south of the CPR tracks. It was a relatively poor neighbourhood,

populated by large families of European immigrants predominantly, but not exclusively, of German background. Many Hungarians, Russians, Austrians (often referred to as Ruthenians), and a few Poles, Irish, and Scots also lived there. A census taken in 1906 of the district, which covered thirty-two square city blocks, lists over 2,000 people – close to one-third of Regina's entire population at the time.

Likely commissioned by the city of Regina, perhaps in recognition of its being named the capital of Saskatchewan the year before, the census provides a glimpse into the demographic makeup of an early Canadian prairie town. In addition to listing their name, address, age, sex, nationality, and religion, residents were asked for the number of dogs they had. Like many cities, Regina had a problem with stray dogs forming packs, which became aggressive and dangerous. The reason, perhaps, that there are so few entries here is that people hesitated to admit they had a dog for fear the city would fine them if their dog was found loose.

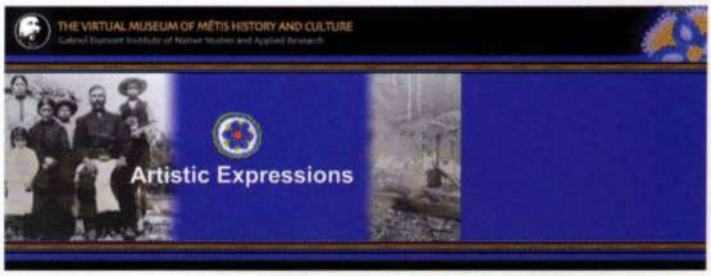
Having a neighbourhood like Germantown was a relatively new phenomenon for the city of Regina. Most immigrants to Canada flocked to major urban centres like Toronto, Montreal, or Winnipeg that had long-established ethnic neighbourhoods. But as the major distribution point for farm machinery and household goods for developing farming communities in the province, Regina must have appealed to some. Also, if a farmer couldn't make a go of it on the Saskatchewan prairie (which differed immensely from the farmlands of central and eastern Europe), he may have found Regina and its Germantown district an alluring alternative. Whatever the reasons, Regina's population flourished from 1906 to 1913, quadrupling in size.

Our thanks to Carey Isaak, City Archivist at the City of Regina Archives for providing us with the image and information.

WEBSITE

Virtually Métis

It was in the West that the Métis became conspicuous in Canadian history. By the mid-to-late nineteenth century, they had not only evolved into a distinct and recognizable ethnic group, they had made an indelible mark on the Canadian psyche. Riel, Dumont, Red River, Batoche: these people and places had become symbols of resistance within Confederation. As it happens, though, these famed personalities and cataclysmic events are still most often the reference points whenever the Métis experience slips into discussion, and for some that's getting a little exasperating. Enter the Gabriel Dumont Institute and the Saskatchewan Archives Board who together have created the Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture (<www.metismuseum.ca>). The usual suspects – Riel, Dumont, Red River, Batoche – are given their due (well, there's lots of due: archival documents, photographs, essays abound on these subjects), but much more is given over to the everyday life of the Métis people – family, community, work, art, faith, celebration, and such – incorporating the earliest records, oral histories, photographs, maps, and video and audio files. This is the place to come, for instance, if you want to bone up on the Métis role in the bison hunt, or traditional Métis medicine or architecture, or the evolution of the Métis flag or Michif language, or embroidery, fiddling, dancing, diet, or – if you're so inclined – the wage-labour economy. Attractively designed and easy to navigate, the Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture is an evolving website, so if you have a pertinent document, *objet*, memory, get in touch.



EXHIBIT

Culture and Counterculture

Intense grooviness comes to the Canadian Museum of Civilization this month with the opening of a new exhibit on Canadian design of the 1960s, the decade some of you may recall (and some of you may not, depending on the chemical state of your brain). It brought many innovations, though for some reason the paper dress was the only one that came to mind until *Cool '60s Design: Celebrating Canadian Craft and Design of the 1960s* (on until November 27) alerted us to the domed Ball-B-Q cooker and the Contempra telephone, two of Canada's contributions to the midcentury modern aesthetic. In the postwar period, they saw the future and there was no Victorian gewgaw, froufrou, or curlicue in it. All was to be sleek and clean and austere. Curiously, the government of Canada was a big patron of the new look, and the exhibit features numerous examples, the Canadian flag being perhaps the best-known, though difficult to ignore would be all those austere airport terminals built in the '60s complete with public art installations of an abstract nature. The apotheosis of Canadian '60s cool – and another section of the exhibit – was Montreal's Expo 67, the world's fair that became a showcase for Canadian artists and designers, including Moshe Safdie for his Cubist mountain of a dwelling known as Habitat. However, in that Expo year, just when modern design appeared triumphant, reaction was already setting in. Elsewhere, in London and San Francisco, the froufrou and curlicue were enjoying a rebirth. Severity was out. Bright colours and fluid designs were in. It was the dawning of the Age of Aquarius. Or was it the dawning of the Age of Macramé? At any rate, *Cool '60s Design* covers this countercultural aesthetic, too. Wear your love beads.

SEPH MESSANA / CANADIAN CENTRE FOR ARCHITECTURE

Habitat 67

OLDWAYS

Chapped hands are common among persons with a languid circulation, who are continually "dabbling" in water during cold weather, and particularly among those with a scrofulous taint, who, without the last, expose their ungloved hands to bleak, cold winds. The best preventives, as well as remedies, are the use of warm gloves out of doors, and the application, night and morning, of a little glycerine, diluted with twice its weight of water, or a little cold cream, spermaceti cerate, salad oil, or any other simple unguent or oil, which should be well rubbed in, the superfluous portion being removed with a towel. This treatment will not only preserve the hands from the effects of cold and damp, but also tend to render them soft and white. Deep chaps which have degenerated into sores should be kept constantly covered with a piece of lint wetted with glycerine or spread with spermaceti ointment, the part being at the same time carefully preserved from dirt, cold, and wind. It is said that a once favorite actress, celebrated for the beauty of her hands, even when in the "sere and yellow leaf," covered them nightly with the flare of a calf or lamb, with the fat attached, over which was drawn a glove or mitten of soft leather. The application of a little glycerine or fatty matter, in the way just indicated, would have been equally effective.

(*The Ladies' Book of Useful Information*, 1896)

THE BEAVER COLLECTION

Take the day off

February 15: To note the construction in 1781 of North America's first lock canal at Côteau-du-Lac, on the St. Lawrence River near Montreal, to accelerate shipment of military supplies westward during the American Revolutionary War. Trim your locks.

February 20: To mark the passage seventy-five years ago of the *Fair Wages and Eight-Hour Day Act*, giving workers in the federal jurisdiction an eight-hour workday. Sleep in a little longer.

March 17: To observe the first time St. Patrick's Day was celebrated in Canada, in Quebec, in 1765. Wear something green. Well, you were going to be wearing some anyway, weren't you?

March 21: To commemorate the settlement 100 years ago of the border between Canada and Alaska. Make a line in the snow.

FACTOID

By day she was Alice Freeman, Toronto schoolteacher. By night she was Faith Fenton, investigative journalist. For nineteen years, Fenton lived a double life, hiding her identity as a journalist because of the occupation's paltry reputation. Eventually, she became a full-time correspondent, witnessing the Klondike Gold Rush firsthand as a newspaper reporter. Fenton joined 200 Canadian soldiers, who made up the "Yukon Field Force," on a grueling journey to the Yukon, and spent five years there before returning to Toronto. She's also known for challenging the stifling conventions of the Victorian era.

Sir John A. slept here

In Shediac, New Brunswick, there's no room at the inn – largely because the inn itself is now gone. After a long and bitter fight that divided the town of 5,000, the pre-Confederation Shediac Hotel came down in December. At the centre of the dispute was the provenance of the hotel. Was it a historic building worth saving or just a dilapidated wreck? The answer depends on whom you talk to.

Armand Bannister fought hard to preserve the hotel, leading the fifty-person Save Our Hotel committee that battled the town council for two years over its decision to demolish the building. "That's a very sad episode in my life, talking about the hotel that should be figuring among the historic sites of Canada and definitely of Shediac," Bannister said.

Without question, the building boasted a rich history. Innkeeper William Weldon built the hotel in 1856, anticipating the railway near Shediac, as well as the ferry service between the town and Summerside, Prince Edward Island. Known then as Weldon House, the inn hosted Sir John A. Macdonald in 1864 when the future prime minister returned to Ottawa after confederation discussions in Charlottetown.

In the 1930s, the thirty-room, three-storey hotel regularly entertained the rich and famous as they arrived on the Pan-American flying boats that travelled between New York and Europe. Clark Gable, Greta Garbo, and the Netherlands' Queen Wilhelmina all stayed at the stop along the clippers' summer route. Even as late as the 1960s, the hotel was the "plush place of Shediac," said town councillor Carmel Brun.

It would not last. Following a series of owners, the now-named Shediac Hotel closed in 2001, badly in need of repairs. The bank owned the hotel for two years before the town purchased it for $290,000 with the intent of tearing it down. The roof had caved in from a rainstorm, and squatters occupied the building for a year, setting a number of fires. Restoration would cost $3 million and renovation another $1 million, according to Brun, who notes the *site* was historic, but not the building itself, which had undergone so many renovations as to not have any original pieces left.

Now the town hopes to build a replica of Weldon House on the spot where it once stood and turn it into an arts and cultural centre complete with pieces salvaged from the Shediac Hotel. "If I'd won the $24 million 649 in August, I would have saved it," Brun said. "It was a money issue." —Charles Mandel

MOMENT

March 17, 1955: A Thursday evening thick with tension and fury. Inside the Montreal Forum, indignant hockey fans hurl eggs,

An injured rioter is led away by Montreal police.

THE DETROIT NEWS ARCHIVES

tomatoes, and even bottles at the president of the National Hockey League. A tear-gas bomb sends thousands of spectators rushing to the exits, choking on noxious fumes. Outside, rioting ensues.

Just the day before, NHL President Clarence Campbell had suspended beloved hockey star Maurice "The Rocket" Richard of the Montreal Canadiens from all regular season and playoff games for hitting an official in a previous match. French Canadians were outraged. To Quebec hockey fans, the fiery Richard was a stickhandling god, a record-breaking hockey powerhouse who had led the Canadiens to several victories and was set to do more of the same in the 1954–55 season.

But it wasn't just hockey enthusiasts who adored him; Quebecers considered Richard a cultural icon. In a time when Anglo domination threatened French-Canadian identity, Rocket Richard's athletic success was considered the success of the French population in general. When Richard whizzed by his opponents and scored on an Anglo goalie, French-Canadians considered it a point for them too. Likewise, Richard's defeats were their defeats. So when Campbell, widely detested among Canadiens fans, ruled against Richard, jeopardizing the Canadiens' chance to win the Stanley Cup, collective francophone anger boiled over.

At the March 17 game between the Canadiens and the Detroit Red Wings, fans expressed their disdain, assaulting Campbell as he sat in the stands. When the smoke-ridden Forum was evacuated and fans hurried to the streets, it was the start of what would be a seven-hour riot, complete with looting, vandalism, fires, and more than sixty arrests. Within the first hours of the melee, more than ten thousand gathered to wreak havoc on Rue St.-Catherine. On the radio, Richard, who had been watching the game at the Forum, pleaded with rioters to calm down and go home. But it wasn't until 3 A.M. that the crowds dissipated and final damages could be tallied. Reports claimed tens of thousands of dollars in property damage, but, thankfully, there were no deaths.

Since dubbed the "Richard Riot," the incident marks a pivotal point in Quebec history. French resentment against English power pervaded 1950s Quebec, and had so, some say, for almost two hundred years – since the French lost their rule of New France to England in the battle on the Plains of Abraham. Well into the twentieth century, French Canadians longed for a regime change, and the riot proved to be one of the loudest expressions of their desire. If not a turning point, it was, at least, a sign of things to come.

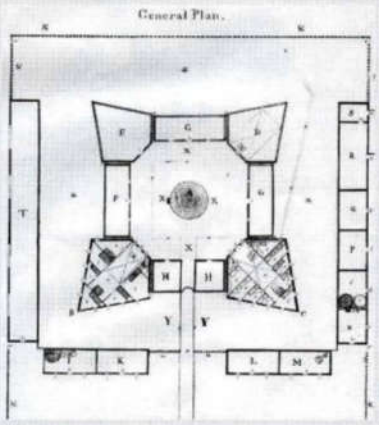
Just a few years later, propelled by nationalist sentiment, Quebec would begin what we now call "The Quiet Revolution"– a period marked by radical transformation. With the election of Premier Jean Lesage and the Liberals in 1960, Quebec's social and political spheres were quickly overhauled, and the province, once deeply anachronistic, was suddenly a modern and forward-thinking heavyweight on the Canadian stage. "Maîtres chez nous" ("Masters in our own house") was the French-Canadian mantra of the time.

Now whether or not Rocket Richard ever wanted to be associated with such politics (and from what we know, he didn't), he, and the events that surrounded him, have become part of the Quiet Revolution story.

N°. 2.
A DESIGN for BUILDING A COMMODIOUS FORT in Room of the present Wore Houses at YORK FACTORY North America.
Humbly submitted to the Governor Deputy Governor and Committee of the Honourable the Hudsons Bay Company by their dutyful faithful and very humble Servant
Joseph Colen.

In 1788, floods severely damaged York Factory, which, due to its strategic location

at the mouth of the Hayes River on Hudson Bay, had been one of the Hudson's Bay Company's principal posts for nearly a century. With trade-goods manufacture, warehousing, and administration increasingly the function of the site in the fiercely competitive fur trade, the new buildings, in Factor Joseph Colen's "Design for Building A Commodious Fort," needed to be substantial. And they were. Called the "Old Octagon" by its inhabitants, the main building was modeled after eighteenth-century European military fortifications, with five-sided, two-storey bastions at each of the corners, connected by four enclosed "curtain sheds" for warehousing. In the bastions were staff amenities – "bed places," cellars, and fireplaces – while the whole structure was surrounded by a series of smaller outbuildings arranged in a square for workshops, storerooms, cook and mess rooms, a distillery, even a barn for cows and pigs. Entered only through the main gate, and each bastion entered only through the courtyard, the new York Factory, completed in 1795, could be well defended against man or beast. Unfortunately, it was not well defended against the climate. The rigid stone and brick foundation and solid wood and brick walls would have worked well in temperate England, but in the heaving permafrost of the Hudson Bay lowlands, they lacked flexibility. By 1831, after thirty-five years' service, the foundations and the building had fallen apart.



BEAVER COLLECTION

LEGACY OF WAR

Remembering Barrett Fort

One day before Remembrance Day 2004, the Elizabeth Apartments burned down in Prince Rupert, B.C., displacing over one hundred people from their homes. Local history also lost something in the fire: the building was erected as an administrative headquarters for the American army during the Second World War.

Another structure built a few kilometres southwest of the Elizabeth during the war may also fall to history's wayside – in this case, because of decades of neglect and possible future development.

In 1939, the Canadian army built Barrett Fort at Prince Rupert's harbour to guard the war base and shipbuilding site. David Hill was an eighteen-year-old machine gunner with the Second Battalion, Canadian Scottish Regiment, when he was sent to the remote coastal town 750 kilometres north of Vancouver in 1939 to hold down the fort until reinforcements arrived.

During his seven-month stay at Barrett Fort, Hill says he mostly remembers being miserable while on sentry, enduring the sideways wind and rain of the North Pacific coast. His battalion's job was to provide machine-gun cover between blasts from the fort's three six-inch guns, but the only action he saw was firing warning shots at Japanese fishermen who didn't understand commands from the picket boat.

After Pearl Harbour, the Americans spent $16 million to turn Rupert into a subport for supplies and munitions because of its proximity to Alaska, causing the town's population to boom from about 6,500 to over 20,000. From 1942 to 1943, many bombs were made and many buildings built in Rupert, including the later-named Elizabeth Apartments. All the while, Barrett Fort's guns were aimed at the ocean.

Earlier this year, a local group suggested preserving the fort, which today is brown with rust and green with moss. Hill, now eighty-three and a new resident of Rupert, says he supports such efforts for Barrett. But he adds that he won't "rush headlong" into these plans, because of high costs and uncertainty over whether people would actually visit a preserved Barrett Fort.

Barrett Fort in the 1940s.
COURTESY CHRIS ARMSTRONG

"It wasn't as if there were any great battles fought around it," says Hill.

Besides neglect, another foe of the fort's future is economic growth. Nearby is Fairview Terminal, which the Prince Rupert Port Authority has eyed for a much-needed expansion into containerized shipping. The port says it wants to preserve the fort if possible, but it isn't promising anything: Barrett Fort is on port land and the plans for expansion have yet to be drawn up.

— Chris Armstrong

Honouring Chinese ancestors

There is an old Chinese belief that if it rains at the end of an ancestral ceremony, the deceased would be taken care of in the spiritual world.

And so, the overcast skies and the threat of impending rain were a welcome sight last October when Montreal's Chinese community gathered at Mount Royal Cemetery. The occasion was the restoration of a monument that was erected in 1904 in memory of the men who settled in Montreal after the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The autumn air was filled with the smell of burning paper money and of steamed chicken and roast pork laid out in containers on the newly constructed altar as offerings to the ancestors. The sound of firecrackers and the rhythmic drum beat of the lion dance awakened the spirits.

Burial lot N500 was the first ethnic cemetery within Mount Royal Cemetery, purchased by a group from Knox Church to bury Cantonese of all religions. For years, trustees of the cemetery refused to allow the Chinese to perform traditional ceremonies to honour their dead. The Chinese Benevolent Association, which was established in 1889, maintained the cemetery, and at families' requests, exhumed the bones of the deceased and sent them to China for burial. It also conducted the annual sacrificial ceremony for the ancestors of the men who died alone and couldn't afford to have their bones sent back to China.

In the first half of the 1900s, Montreal's Chinese population was almost entirely male due to the head tax imposed by the federal government to deter the men from bringing their families to Canada. After the railway neared completion in 1885, Chinese immigrants were forced to pay a $50 head tax. In 1900, it doubled to $100; in 1903 it was raised to $500. In 1921, Montreal's Chinese population consisted of 2,121 men and sixty-five women. The enactment of the 1923 Exclusion Act stopped Chinese immigration completely until it was repealed in 1947.

The association, renamed the Chinese Association of Montreal in the late 1970s, still maintains the plot and conducts the annual sacrificial ceremony. However, the practice of sending the bones back to China ended many years ago.

At the end of the ceremony the skies opened up and rained on the attendees who stood under umbrellas and enjoyed a boxed lunch. It was the perfect end to a momentous day.

—Day's Lee

BRYANT CHANG

Chinese monument in Montreal's Mount Royal Cemetery.

ARTIFACT

In 1851, engineer (and later British Columbia politician) Joseph Despard Pemberton (1821-1893) began to survey southern Vancouver Island for the Hudson's Bay Company using this theodolite to read the horizontal and vertical angles of the landscape and create maps for the colonial enterprise. From these larger survey lines came the smaller divisions of Fort Victoria's city lots.

Built in England by Troughton and Simms of London, this 1839 machine, on display at the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria, combined mathematics and optical perfection. Consisting of a heavy brass base that supports a telescope, with levels marked in degrees and minutes, the theodolite is so precise that the surveyor uses magnifying lenses mounted along the base and beside the wheel of the telescope to read the finely engraved graduations of seconds. The instrument could even calculate longitude using astronomical measurements. Similar instruments were used to set up British Columbia's first astronomical observatory and on Sir George Everest's Indian Survey, to measure the world's highest mountain. These survey instruments defined the borders of nations, created towns, established colonial claims, and took the measure of our world.

More information is available from the Royal British Columbia Museum at <www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca>.

ROYAL BC MUSEUM / 968.21.9

Theodolite.

ON RECORD

I have sometimes doubted whether there could be a great race without the hardy influence of winters in due proportion.

— Walt Whitman, Diary in Canada, 1904.

Cecil Rosner on

Free Speech and Joseph Howe

Joseph Howe (1804–1873), lithograph by C. G. Crehen, 1854, from an earlier portrait painted in 1851.

Anyone who thinks libel chill is a modern notion need only consider the case of Bartemas Ferguson, publisher of the Niagara *Spectator*. Hauled into court on a charge of seditious libel in 1819, the unfortunate Ferguson learned that if you pillory the government, the government might just pillory you. He was sentenced to eighteen months in jail, fined £50, and ordered to stand in the pillory for one hour daily during the first month of his sentence. His sole crime was printing articles critical of Upper Canada's government. While parts of the sentence were later commuted, Ferguson's muckraking career was over and the message to journalists was clear: be careful what you publish, especially when it comes to criticism of colonial administrators.

Libel was a constant concern for editors and publishers in the British North American colonies. Civil suits were common, and the government always had the option of a criminal libel prosecution. Despite the dangers, muckraking flourished in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Radical and reform-minded editors took aim at the cliques and compacts that dominated political life in the colonies. In many cases, those same editors ran for political office and tried to effect change more directly. The aim for most was a form of Responsible Government.

Such was the political landscape on New Year's Day in 1835 when readers of the *Novascotian* in Halifax opened their weekly newspaper. At the bottom of the second column, on page 2, was a letter to the publisher, Joseph Howe. Signed simply "The People," it began with a sweeping analysis of colonial affairs:

> *In a young and poor country, where the sons of rich and favoured families alone receive education at the public expence – where the many must toil to support the extortions and exactions of a few; where the hard earnings of the people are lavished on an Aristocracy, who repay their ill timed generosity with contempt and insult; it requires no ordinary nerve in men of moderate circumstances and humble pretensions, to stand forward and boldly protest against measures which are fast working the ruin of the Province.*

The letter denounced the local government of Halifax, a tight group of magistrates who controlled all aspects of the civil administration. It accused magistrates and police of extorting more than £30,000 from the people over the years. And without naming names, it gave exact details of alleged abuses:

> *Is it not notorious, that one of the present active Magistrates has contrived for years to filch from one establishment, and that dedicated to the comfort of the poor and destitute, at least £300 per annum? ... These things, Mr. Howe, cannot much longer be endured, even by the loyal and peaceable inhabitants of Nova Scotia.*

Muckraking by way of letters to the editor was a common device of the time. Though the letter was actually written by George Thompson, one of Joseph Howe's friends, everyone in Halifax assumed it must be fully endorsed by the publisher. But the thirty-year-old Howe was an unlikely candidate to be inciting rebellious thoughts in Nova Scotia. Son of a United Empire Loyalist, he was not especially radical. In fact, both his father and half-brother were magistrates themselves, and he was fiercely loyal to Britain. While the Patriotes of Lower Canada and William Lyon Mackenzie of Upper Canada were marching towards open rebellion, Howe remained cautious.

Despite his Tory tendencies, though, Howe had become disillusioned with local authority. By 1832, he was taking part in the grand juries that provided some oversight of magistrates. Late in 1834, he told his readers he was starting a concerted campaign against abuses in local government. Thompson's anonymous letter on New Year's Day was a dramatic illustration of his mood.

Justice moved rapidly in the following weeks. Though the magistrates might have sued Howe in civil court, they chose instead to ask the attorney

NOVA SCOTIA LEGISLATURE

general for help. He was indicted on February 20, 1835, and the trial was set for March 2. Howe was charged with "seditiously contriving, devising and intending to stir up and incite discontent and sedition among His Majesty's subjects." The government was confident of a conviction. Fifteen years earlier, it had charged William Wilkie with criminal libel for publishing a twenty-one-page pamphlet that accused Halifax magistrates of corruption. A jury took five minutes to convict him, and he was sentenced to two years of hard labour.

At the time, truth was no defence in a case of criminal libel. Howe visited two or three lawyers, showed them the attorney general's notice of trial, and was told he had no case. Instead of hiring any of these naysayers, he borrowed their books and read everything he could about libel in a week. He spent the next week constructing a defence, but only managed to memorize the first two paragraphs of his speech when the trial was set to begin.

Presiding over the jury trial was Chief Justice Brenton Halliburton, whose appointment Howe had previously condemned and whose pronouncements he had often criticized. The prosecution called just one witness to establish that the libel had been published. The letter was read into the record, and the Crown reminded the jury "as regards public persons, official characters, magistrates and other functionaries, the law considers a libel a higher offence than when committed against private individuals." Howe called no witnesses. All that was left was for him to address the jury.

What followed was one of the most renowned speeches in Canadian history, a ringing denunciation of arbitrary power and an endorsement of freedom of speech. Howe spoke for six and a quarter hours, insisting that he had no malicious motive in printing the letter. As for the magistrates, he said he bore them no personal animosity – though as a group, he called them "the most negligent and imbecile, if not the most reprehensible body, that ever mismanaged a people's affairs. ... They may expect much from the result of this trial; but before I have done with them, I hope to convince them that they, and not I, are the real criminals here."

Howe, the future premier of Nova Scotia, member of Sir John A. Macdonald's cabinet, and ultimately lieutenant governor of his province, showed his oratorical skills for the first time. Tears rolled down the cheek of one juror as Howe reached a dramatic climax:

> *Will you permit the sacred fire of liberty, brought by your fathers from the venerable temples of Britain, to be quenched and trodden out on the simple altars they have raised? Your verdict will be the most important in its consequences ever delivered before this tribunal; and I conjure you to judge me by the principles of English law, and to leave an unshackled press as a legacy to your children. ...Yes, gentlemen, come what will, while I live, Nova Scotia shall have the blessing of an open and unshackled press.*

The jury took ten minutes to acquit him. A holiday atmosphere transformed Halifax for the next two days as the people celebrated his victory. The verdict triggered a crisis in the local administration, causing magistrates to resign and other newly nominated administrators to refuse their office. Howe himself declared a victory for press freedom.

The Howe trial is noteworthy more for its symbolic effect than any legal precedent it may have set. While charges of sedition have largely disappeared, journalists across the country continue to face civil libel threats, with continually escalating damage awards that inevitably provide a chilling effect on investigative and muckraking work. Moreover, Canadian law continues to restrict their ability to protect sources and conduct their journalism in a comprehensive manner. Even the introduction of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, with its protection of freedom of expression and the press, hasn't stopped courts from limiting press rights when those limits are deemed to be consistent with a democratic society. Last year, for instance, the Supreme Court of Canada upheld a Quebec judge who levied substantial fines against a broadcaster for defamation, even though the publication was true and in the public interest. Unfortunately, as in Joseph Howe's trial, Quebec courts still do not consider truth to be a sufficient defence in the case of libel.

In his address to the jury, Howe explicitly rejected the American experience, which guaranteed freedom of the press in its First Amendment. "I do not ask for the impunity which the American press enjoys," he said, "but give me what a British subject has a right to claim – impartial justice, administered by those principles of the English law that our forefathers fixed and have bequeathed. Let not the sons of the Rebels look across the border to the sons of the Loyalists, and reproach them that their press is not free." Since 1964, Americans have had something else: a landmark precedent known as *New York Times* v. *Sullivan*, which makes it extremely difficult for libel charges to be filed by public officials. Journalists are allowed to publish reports about public figures, even if they turn out to be wrong, so long as they don't display a reckless disregard for the truth. The idea is that citizens should have leeway to criticize their elected representatives. In Canada, meanwhile, no such protections exist, and politicians can and do routinely file libel charges against journalists.

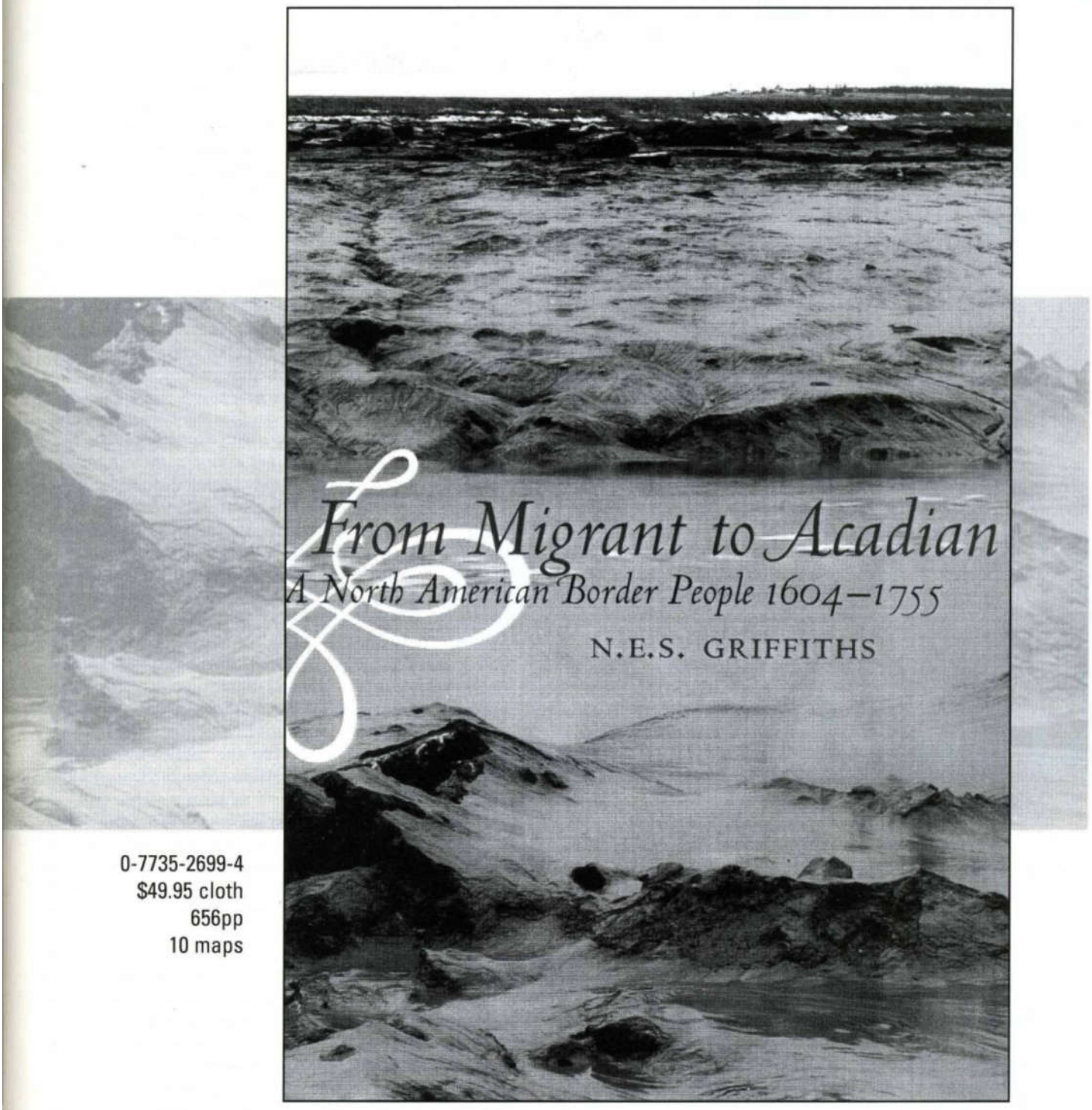
Joseph Howe's victory in a Halifax courtroom still resonates 170 years later. But for Canadian journalists, more victories remain to be won.

Cecil Rosner is executive producer of CBC Television in Manitoba. He is writing a book about the history of investigative journalism in Canada. Contact him at <cecilrosner@shaw.ca>.

ET CETERA

The text of Howe's defence can be found on the following website: <www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/FACTS/howedefense.htm>.

***Joseph Howe, (Volume 1), Conservative Reformer, 1804-1848* by J. Murray Beck. McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston and Montreal, 1982.**



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Tartan and *Pure Laine*

by Louisa Blair

Robbie Burns Night in Quebec City, 2004. A stalwart remnant of Quebec Scots brave the minus-thirty-degree weather to make their way across town, including Quebec City's Fraser Highlanders regiment, sporting their kilts and hairy– and by the time they get there, hoary– bare knees.

A descendant of the first captain of the cold-kneed Fraser Highlanders, whose legendary fierceness won Quebec for the British in 1759, is toasting the haggis alongside descendants of a *pure laine* Quebecer, whose Scottish ancestor fled to France in the sixteenth century. The setting is the basement not of a Presbyterian but of a Catholic church, the stabbing of the haggis is fittingly bloodcurdling, and the litany of toasts is riotously bilingual.

What were Highland Scots doing fighting in the British army? What were the Scots doing in Quebec *before* the Conquest? And what impact did Scots have on the way the British treated their new subjects?

We tend to think of the Battle on the Plains of Abraham in 1759 resulting in the replacement of a French Catholic regime with an English Protestant one. But Quebec was conquered not by England but by *Britain*, an entity that had come into being only fifty-two years earlier, when the Act of Union brought Scotland into the fold.

The first three British governors of Quebec were not in fact the least bit representative of the rather homogenous English public at all. The first was Scottish, the second was Irish, and the third was Swiss. They all understood the realities of ethnic diversity only too well, and how quickly and disastrously things can go wrong.

Throughout August of 1759, Wolfe's troops burned crops and houses all the way up and down the St. Lawrence River from Murray Bay to Kamouraska. When the city fell to the British in September, the first commander was one of Wolfe's brigadiers, Robert Monckton, who only four years previously had carried out orders to expel more than a thousand French Canadians, the Acadians, from their homelands downriver. The Canadiens dreaded what would happen next.

The first civil governor of Quebec, James Murray was one of many Scots from Jacobite families who were absorbed into the British military following the Jacobite defeat at Culloden. As a British officer, Murray lamented his family's loyalties, yet his tolerant attitude toward his French subjects reflected Scotland's traditional alliance with France, as well as the egalitarian principles of the Scottish Enlightenment.

In 1760 the post of governor switched to another of Wolfe's brigadiers, James Murray. To the growing surprise of the Canadiens, they found themselves living under the command of a man who stood up for them against the repressive laws of imperial Great Britain.

He seemed personally to favour the local French-speaking population, whom he called "the best and bravest race on the globe," over his fellow British colonists, whom he described to a friend as "the most cruel, ignorant, rapacious fanatics who ever existed."

Murray's orders were to establish a British-style legal system and an elected assembly along the lines of the British Parliament. He did neither. He refused to establish an assembly because under British law, Catholics could not vote, so most of the population would be unrepresented.

The Conquest of Quebec in 1759 could have meant the end of French culture in the province. But a tolerant governor and emerging egalitarian ideas showed another way.

Under his rule, French Canadian citizens sat on juries, lawyers pled in the lower courts, and property owners continued their French system of land tenure. And perhaps most consoling to the Canadiens, against express orders to do everything possible to Anglicize and Anglicanize the colony, Murray ended up recommending his friend Jean-Olivier Briand for election as the Catholic bishop. This meant that priests could be ordained, and to the outrage of the Protestants who wanted to convert everybody, the Catholic religion would not die out in the land.

The "rapacious fanatics" did manage to remove Murray from office in 1766, but his tolerant rule of Quebec laid the foundation for the 1774 Quebec Act, guaranteeing religious freedom to the Roman Catholic majority. Murray's disobedient practice of cultural continuation, rather than Anglicization, set a precedent that changed Britain's future policy towards its colonies, and ensured that the unique character of Quebec survived to this day.

The traditional explanation for Murray's behaviour is that he feared the French would join the American Revolution and therefore treated them kindly. But the seeds of the Quebec Act were sown long before winds of the Revolution reached London. And in any case, there were plenty of other reasons to do with Murray himself, who was not an Englishman but a Scot and, moreover, a Jacobite Scot.

The Jacobites – those loyal to the deposed Catholic king, James II – were the most subversive political element in the British Isles, and they had a particularly dangerous liaison with France.

The Crown plays leapfrog

One of the many differences between England and Scotland was their relationship with France and with Catholicism.

The English and the French had been at war with each other since 1689, and at the time of the Conquest, English Protestants saw Catholics as enemy aliens, almost the devil incarnate.

Catholics in England were not allowed to vote and were excluded from all state offices, forbidden to possess weapons, taxed punitively, and treated in law as potential traitors. In 1714, the Crown had passed over fifty rightful heirs because they had the misfortune to be Catholic, landing finally on an uncharismatic middle-aged German from Hanover, George Lewis, the first of the King Georges. (Catholics cannot become kings or queens of England to this day.) Anti-Catholic sentiment was so strong in 1778 that when Britain proposed a Catholic Relief Act (that allowed Catholics to sign up for the fighting in America), it took 10,000 soldiers to put down the Protestant rioters. The Gordon Riots were the longest, most widespread, and the deadliest ever seen in British history.

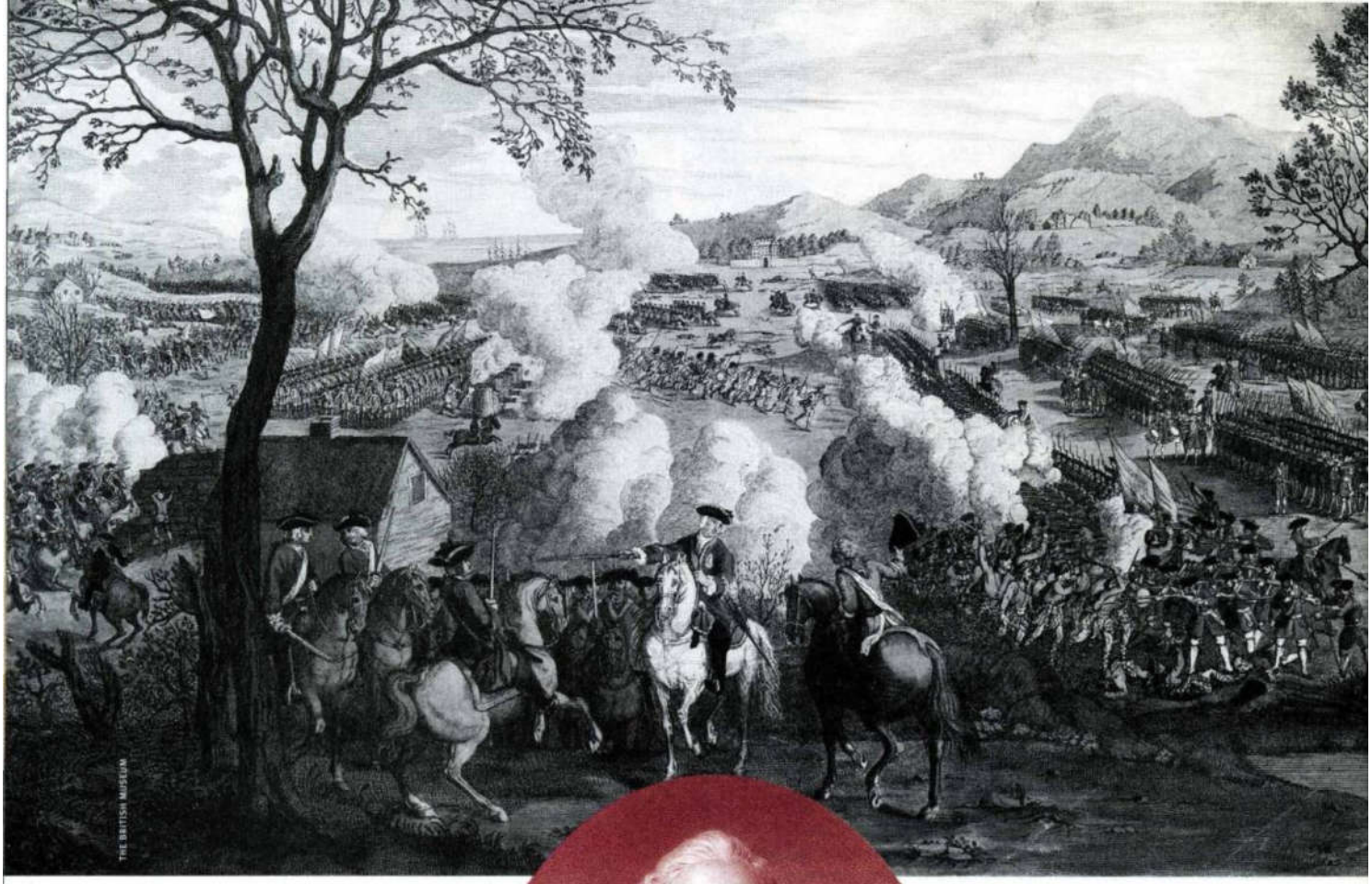
A tiny Protestant island within the sea of a militantly Catholic Europe, England saw the French as superstitious, decadent, democratically backward, and profoundly threatening. While the Protestants considered themselves as the elect of God, they considered the French the biblical equivalent of the heathens: a sermon preached at the Peace of Paris in 1763 was entitled "The triumph of Israelites over Moabites, or Protestants over Papists."

Murray's strongest competitor for the post of first civil governor of Quebec was a man who embodied many of these English sentiments, John Wilkes. He was a passionate Scots-hater, so much so that Scottish children burned effigies of him on the king's birthday. As for the French, he liked them even less. As a member of the Laudable Association of Anti-Gallicans, founded in England in 1745, he believed that French contamination had been an evil since the Norman Conquest. One of the association's mandates was to rouse the English public to boycott French imports, and another was to fight gallicisms in the English language.

To his fury, the job went to a grasping Scots nobleman with suspicious French connections. Wilkes's consolation prize was being appointed the Lord Mayor of London.

Claret in the oyster house: The Auld Alliance

The Scots had quite a different relationship with both Catholicism and with France. The Scots and the French had formed their first formal alliance (known as the Auld Alliance) in 1295 to fight their common enemy, the English. Throughout most of the sixteenth century, reciprocity treaties made Scottish and French nationalities interchangeable. Plenty of Scottish lairds settled in France, blending comfortably into French seigneurial society, and it was



THE BRITISH MUSEUM

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-39755

de rigueur for the sons of Scots nobility to undertake part of their education in France.[1]

The Highlands of Scotland were largely Catholic, as were its kings and queens. The College écossais in Paris (founded 1313 by Robert the Bruce), attached to the Sorbonne, turned out Jansenist Scottish priests during the Counter-Reformation as theologically rigid in their own way as their Calvinist enemies back home.

Scots bodyguards, the Garde de la Manche, protected the person of the French monarch from 1419 until 1844. When Mary Queen of Scots married the French Dauphin in 1560, a regiment of Scots soldiers became a fulltime component of the French army.

Although the political alliance was over by the mid-eighteenth century, the French connection still played an important role in the Scottish Enlightenment, which was in full swing. The books of Voltaire, Montesqueiu, and Rousseau were smuggled across the Channel and reprinted in Edinburgh and Glasgow. So many Scottish philosophers visited Voltaire's house in England, where he was in exile, that he called himself "l'aubergiste de l'Europe." He in turn declared himself a devotee of the Scottish philosopher David Hume, whom he called "Saint David."

Many details of Scottish daily life were still full of French influence. The Scottish intellectuals who debated politics, philosophy, theology, and literature in Edinburgh's oyster houses did not oil their discussions with beer or wine, con-

[1]Amongst aristocrats in both England and Scotland, French was still a prerequisite for entry into high society or high office in the eighteenth century. As late as 1818, a visiting American diplomat dining at Lord Castlereagh's London house was astonished to find that everyone was conversing in French. The middle classes, including John Wilkes, were disgusted with this francophilia and tried to shame the aristocracy into giving it up.

Prince Charles Stuart, also known as Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Young Pretender 1722-1788. Grandson of James II, the Catholic monarch deposed in 1688 by William of Orange, in 1745 Charles raised an army and invaded England, intending to put his father, James Stuart, on the throne. When promised support from France and English Jacobites never came, however, he and his followers retreated to Scotland, where in 1746 they suffered a devastating defeat at the Battle of Culloden Moor (above) against the Hanoverian forces of the Duke of Cumberland. Charles escaped to France. The last of a series of sporadic civil wars aimed at reinstating the Stuart monarchy, Culloden was followed by a period of severe repression and reprisal for the Highland Scots.

trary to legend, but on claret, the favoured Scots table wine dating back to an ancient link with Bordeaux. The Lowland Scot spoke Scots, which was almost unintelligible in England (and full of French), and the Highland Scot spoke Gaelic, which had common roots with the Celtic languages still spoken in France.[2] The Scottish legal system, based on reason more than on precedent, was far closer to the French legal system than to the English, and Scottish lawyers were routinely sent to study in France or Holland for two years.

While there was plenty of marine traffic and marriage between France and Scotland, the latter was still cut off from England, physically and culturally. The English finally did get around to building a road, just in time for Bonnie Prince Charlie (Charles Edward Stuart) and the Scots Jacobites to use it to invade England in 1746.

Catholics, kilts, and Culloden: The fight for the House of Stuart

The Jacobites began agitating when James II fled England after the Glorious Revolution (1688), and the Protestant William of Orange and his wife Mary took the throne. The Jacobites tried for nearly a century to restore the Stuart Catholic monarchy to the British throne, with the backing of the French army. Among the Jacobites were English and Irish Catholics, Scots Highlanders, and Scottish Lowland Episcopalians, including the Murray family.

Just fourteen years before the British took Quebec, in 1746, Prince Charles Edward Stuart and his Jacobite supporters made it to within 175 kilometres of London. A 7,000-strong French army were held back by a storm in the English Channel, and without its support the Jacobites were badly beaten at Culloden Moor. Brutal reprisals by British troops were legendary, although one young officer, Major James Wolfe, offered to give up his commission rather than obey his commander's orders to kill a survivor, the twenty-year-old Charles Fraser of Inverlochy.

Charles Stuart escaped back to France. Highland clansmen who had fought for the Prince disappeared back into the glens. But now the British government was determined to rid itself of the Jacobites. Thousands were jailed. Highland clansmen were no longer allowed to carry weapons, play bagpipes or, worst of all, wear tartans or kilts.

Protestant England was triumphant. Handel wrote his oratorio *Judas Maccabaeus* to celebrate the victory at Culloden, once again depicting the Jacobites as the heathen Moabites and the Protestant Hanoverians as the Chosen People.

Culloden was a turning point for the Jacobites. Most of the surviving Highland chieftains now saw restoring their king as a lost cause and blamed their failure on the French.

[2]Scots is still full of French, e.g., "dinnae fash yourself," which means "Don't get angry," is closer to "ne vous fâchez pas."

MUSÉE NATIONAL DES BEAUX-ARTS DU QUÉBEC

The 78th Fraser Highlanders, Quebec, in 1759. **Watercolour by John H. McNaughton, 1896. Raised by the British to fight in North America, some of the Highlanders had fought against the British at Culloden. But following their defeat, many Scots fighters, feeling betrayed by the French who had failed to come to their aid in the battle, shifted their loyalties to their conquerors. Under the command of their former enemy James Wolfe, the Highlanders played a major role in the siege of Quebec in 1759. After the regiment disbanded in 1763, many soldiers of Jacobite background remained in Canada, and with their Catholic religion and knowledge of French, assimilated easily into Quebec society.**

They were persecuted and desperate, and to get back into British good books they used their ancient prerogative to call up their men for battle, this time on behalf of the House of Hanover.

Thus Simon Fraser, who called up the Seventy-eighth Fraser Highlanders to go and fight in Quebec, had seen his own father hanged for treason after Culloden. Many of his troops had fought on the other side at Culloden, including the brother of Charles Fraser of Inverlochy, whose life Wolfe had spared twelve years previously. Some say it was at

Trembling Upper Lips: Canada's Un-English British Governors

Murray's successor, Guy Carleton, was also far from the English Protestant stereotype. His family was part of the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland, which held itself aloof from the Catholics, the Irish Presbyterians, and the English alike. The Carletons were comfortably off farmers, and theirs was the privileged class in Ireland. But Carleton's Irishness held back his promotion in the British army, as had Murray's Scottishness, and he lagged behind on the promotional ladder until Wolfe insisted he wanted Carleton with him at Quebec. In Carleton's era, successive Penal Laws in Ireland repressed Catholics with increasing severity and resulted in a violent rebellion before the end of the century. The Protestant Ascendancy had conflicting views on these laws, and with the influence of the French Enlightenment, many of them were repealed by the end of the century.

Carleton, appointed governor in 1768, continued to support the Catholic Church by extending Murray's *concordat* with Briand, and he wished to "leave the Canadian laws almost entire," reversing any policy of Anglicization. When he had orders to the contrary, he simply kept them secret, and carried on. With his influence, the Quebec Act was finally passed in 1774. Whether he was nervous that unhappy Canadiens would stage an American-style revolution, or he felt genuine sympathy with them, historians are still undecided, but the result was the same: he managed to hold the two peoples together. Following his second term of office (by which time he was Lord Dorchester), his successor resorted to the time-honoured way of resolving social differences: partition. The territory was split into Lower and Upper Canada.

Between Carleton's two regimes, in 1778 a third non-English Protestant, the French-speaking Swiss mercenary Frederick Haldimand, took command. He grew up in the small town of Yverdon, Switzerland, sharing the region with the majority French Catholics. As a Huguenot refugee, his father had to wait for twenty-three years for full citizenship.

Haldimand was a career soldier, working as a mercenary for the Prussian, Dutch, and finally the British army. British officials and fellow officers never let him forget that he was a mercenary, and not really British, although his command of French and his intelligent professionalism made him indispensable to them on many occasions. He, too, was held back in the advancement of his career by his ethnicity.

His career as governor of Quebec was at a time when the Canadiens looked likely to join the American Revolution, especially as France had joined the rebels. Haldimand upheld the Quebec Act, which he believed had "prevented and can ... prevent the emissaries of France and the rebels from drawing over the Canadian clergy and *noblesse*." He was convinced that the religion and rights of the French Canadians would be in danger when the Americans took Quebec: "Their intolerance should be made known," he wrote, "the *curés* should speak of it." He is remembered for his iron rule of Quebec while it was in danger of going the way of the Americas, and especially for throwing the founders of the Montreal *Gazette* in jail. But the Revolution over, he was outraged at the lack of provision in the peace agreement for the First Nations. It was Haldimand who forced the British government to grant the Mohawks asylum and land in Canada. And along with his predecessors, he took a kind of artful revenge on his xenophobic British masters by ignoring orders that would alter property laws in favour of the British settlers. —L.B.

Quebec that the Highlanders took their revenge on the French failure to support them then.

The last attempt to restore the Catholic Stuart monarchy was an unsuccessful plot to kidnap King George and put Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie, or the Young Pretender) in his place. It was organized by the notorious Jacobite Lord Elibank, or Alexander Murray, just five years before his younger brother James Murray arrived in Quebec.

Bare Betty and the Jacobites: Murray's unfortunate connections

Murray's family were Scottish lowland nobility. Once impoverished by their association with the ill-fated Stuart kings, they were struck low a second time by the eighteenth-century equivalent of the dot-com bubble, known as the South Sea Bubble. Murray was the fourteenth child, and his mother Bare Betty was possibly none too happy to have another bairn to deal with just when their fortunes were in mid-plummet.

Bare Betty, or Elizabeth Stirling, was so called because of an incident at school. When an examiner addressed her as Betty, she drew herself up to her full height and retorted, in colourful language, that she might be addressed as Mistress Betty, or as Miss Betty, but "*not* bare *Betty*." As if to prove that the Scottish sense of humour has never changed, she has come down to us through history as Bare Betty.

After the loss of their fortune, her husband Lord Elibank promised his wife, as so many husbands have promised so many wives since, that "nor you may depend on it will I venture a groat more that way." Realizing that the only asset he had left was a parcel of rather neglected and unprofitable land around Ballencrieff, their ancestral home, he turned his energies from the stock market to agriculture and founded The Society of Improvers in the Knowledge of Agriculture in Scotland, and then sat back to watch his unruly children make their way in the world on their own.

Scots settlers were quite happy to fall into the seigneurial system, both as seigneurs and as tenants, in Canada. Scottish tenants were used to swearing fealty to a laird, and the lairds were used to ruling over private dynasties of vast tracts of wilderness.

One of their sons, Patrick, became an Edinburgh intellectual and was known for his savage wit and his "inexhaustible fund of Jacobite humour and argument." He founded the Select Society, a group of men who were at the centre of the Scottish Enlightenment, and who included philosopher David Hume, the great Lord Kames (whose last words to his legal colleagues were "Fare ye weel, ye bitches!"), and Adam Smith. Although Samuel Johnson called Patrick Murray "one of the few Scotchmen whom he met with pleasure and parted from with regret," he and his brother had been fingered as fanatical Jacobites by none other than Horace Walpole, the British writer, aristocrat, and devotee of George II.

Another son, Alexander, had been jailed for insulting the King's ministers at the Westminster election in 1751. When invited to accept an admonition on his knees before the House of Commons, he refused, saying he only ever knelt before God, and back he went to jail. When he was released in 1751, the London mobs hailed his release with cries of "Murray and Liberty!" He immediately began plotting to restore the Young Pretender once again.

James had entered the British army as a young man with the help of a relative, but he wasn't getting promoted very fast. Although Scots aristocrats generally made a point of refusing to socially ostracize those on the other side of the Stuart-Hanoverian divide, the same was not true of the English. Neither Patrick nor Alexander, twice in Newgate jail and now in exile in France, were good for James's reputation with the Hanoverian authorities. After twenty-three years of military service, he was still only a captain, while many of his peers were already generals.

True to ancient aristocratic tradition, James Murray used a strategic marriage to rescue himself from obscurity. When stationed in Hastings to catch smugglers, Murray fell in love with the daughter of a staunch Whig Englishman, John Collier, with excellent connections in the British establishment. Collier conquered his misgivings about this impecunious soldier from a notorious Jacobite family, allowed him to marry his daughter, and promoted his cause tirelessly.

Murray knew only too well that Collier had saved him from the stigma of his brothers' reputation. "I'm sure time and opportunity," he wrote to him, "if fortune favours me with any, will convince all the world that I have no share in their guilt, tho' I am likely to have the whole punishment of it unless protected by your influence. Hitherto I am very sensible it has been that alone that has procured my rank and good fortune."

With his new patron's help, James Murray set sail for Canada.

The best and the bravest: Murray in Canada

Professionally speaking, Quebec was the making of Murray. But with the baggage that he carried, we should not be surprised that he understood and empathized more with the Canadiens than with the English merchants, who were already making predations in the new colony.

Jacobites tended to be nostalgic for rural life and the authority of traditional hierarchies, and according to historian Arthur Herman, "detested the new rising competitive capitalist society, with its getting and spending, its greedy merchants and vulgar upstarts ... as much as any Marxist." Murray would have found many people who shared these attitudes amongst the Canadian clergy and seigneurs.[3]

He had grown up in a culture with more sympathies towards the French Catholic mindset than towards a Protestant English Hanoverian mindset. No wonder he refused to obey his orders when it came to establishing a Protestant assembly.

The indignity of the Act of Union still rankled with many Scots. But out of their own subjugation at the hands of the English, they had managed to preserve their own legal system, which was closer to the French than to the English, and their traditional system of land tenure, which was more like the seigneurial system than the British system. These two distinctly Scottish institutions were precisely the elements that Murray excised from his orders about how to treat the new French subjects of the British Empire.

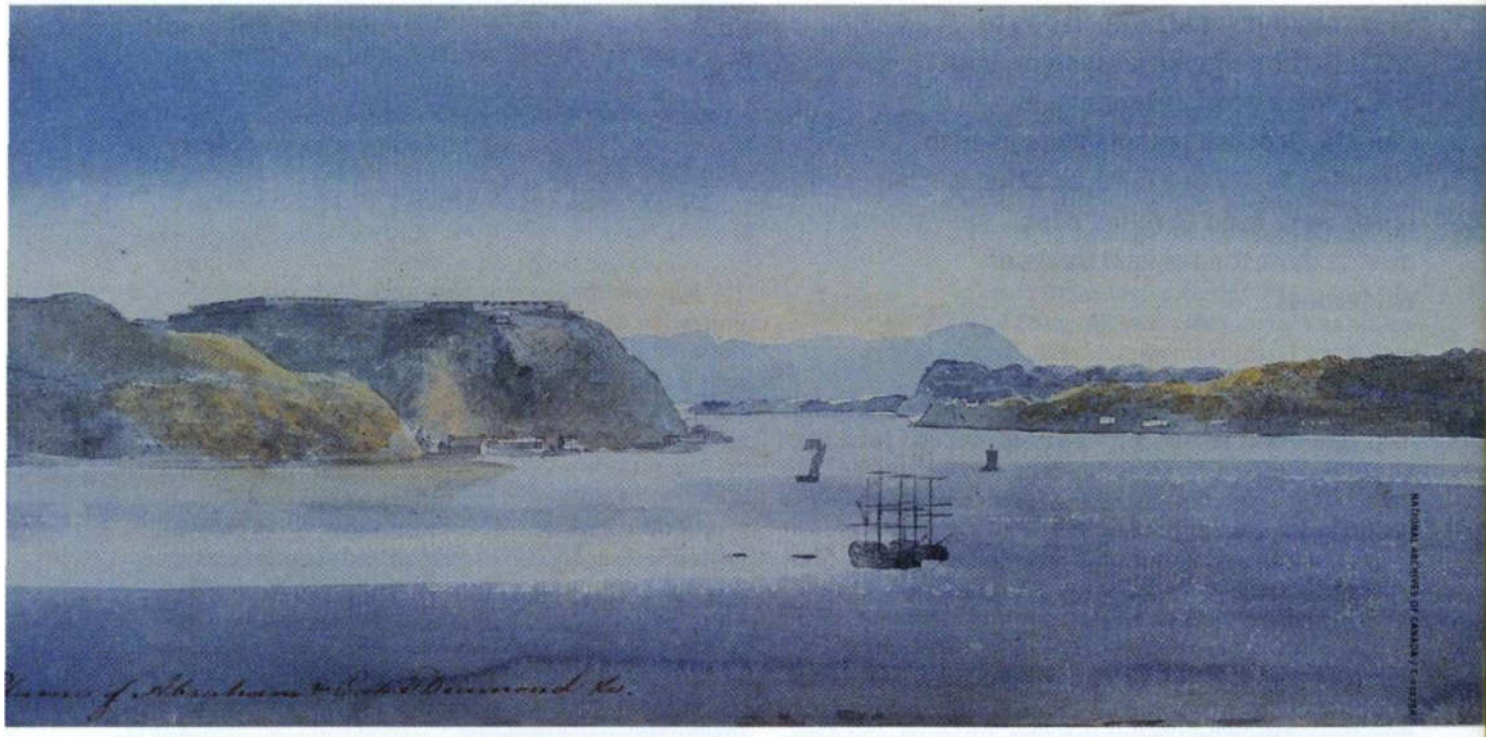
This also explains why Scots settlers were quite happy to fall into the seigneurial system, both as seigneurs and as tenants, in Canada. Scottish tenants were used to swearing fealty to a laird, and the lairds were used to ruling over private dynasties of vast tracts of wilderness. They quickly intermarried with the Canadiens, and many Gaelic-speaking families moved directly to French.[4] They were also used to the weather: Orkneymen who came over to work as Hudson's Bay Company factors used to quip that they came to Canada "to warm up."

His cultural history also explains Murray's attitude toward the Catholic Church, which was far from the knee-jerk middle-class English attitude. In Scotland, Catholics were a minority, but he had also served in Ireland, and he knew what a violent mess Catholic repression could result in if applied to a majority.

Murray himself had also had firsthand experience of religious exclusion. Scots Episcopalians and Catholics were shut out under Presbyterian, and then English Protestant rule.

[3]Most of whom were from France, and mostly ultramontane, and whom the British government firmly believed were spies.

[4]Former Conservative cabinet minister Flora Macdonald is a sixth-generation Canadian, but the first to speak English. Her ancestors were all bilingual in Gaelic and French.



The Plains of Abraham and Cape Diamond. **Watercolour by George Heriot, c. 1793. Early on the morning of September 13, 1759, General James Wolfe landed his men at Anse-Aux-Foulons below Quebec. The French troops above were not expecting the British to land there, and Highland Scots members of the advance party replied to their sentries in fluent French. Thinking the landing craft were actually French supply boats from downstream, the sentries let down their guard, allowing the soldiers to scale the cliff. Later that day, Quebec fell to the English in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham.**

Now the English merchants of Quebec and settlers from New England wanted to impose a similar kind of exclusion on the French. "If ... the Popish [anti-Catholic] laws must be exerted with rigour in Canada, for God's sake procure my retreat," he wrote to his friend Archibald Montgomery, "as I cannot be witness to the misery of a people that I love and admire."

John Wilkes, his rival back in England, wasn't the least surprised that Murray was behaving in the colonies in a way that was so "fatal and hostile to England." He was, after all, a Scot, so no wonder he was batting for the enemy.

The Franco-Scots in Canada

Murray must have known that there were fellow Scots in Quebec long before the British conquered it. There were bound to be, as France was crawling with Scots refugees. Cartier's navigator, John Rotz, was a Franco-Scot, as was the first *pilote du roi* on the St. Lawrence River, Abraham Martin *dit l'écossais*. The field where he kept his herd of cows was known as the Plains of Abraham. Scots settlers thrived among the Acadians in Nova Scotia.

In 1759 there were Scots on the French side as well as the British side who had fought together against the English at Culloden only a few years before. Chevalier de Johnstone, for example, Major-General Lévis' aide-de-camp and the son of an Edinburgh merchant, had also been Bonnie Prince Charlie's aide-de-camp, and had escaped with him to France after Culloden. He was justifiably nervous at the thought of falling prisoner to English soldiers whom he had helped to capture at Prestonpans. But after his side lost at Quebec, he stayed on with a cousin who was in the British artillery, and no doubt shared a good bottle of claret in celebration of their reunion.

The man who relinquished the keys of Quebec, the Lieutenant du Roi, was another Franco-Scot, Jean-Baptiste-Nicholas-Roch de Ramezay, whose ancestor, Sir John Ramsay, had been exiled to France in the early seventeenth century. One of his sisters was a seigneur who ran a successful sawmill, and the other sister, Louise, was a powerful six-foot tall nun who paid her convent dowry in boards and planks. Louise was so passionately patriotic, and so tall, that Murray threatened to conscript her into a grenadier company.

The Auld Alliance came to a conclusive and ironic end with the capture of Quebec: Scots soldiers heading for the foot of the cliff in a boat were able to trick the sentries at the foot of the cliff in the dark by answering their questions in perfect French.

Louisa Blair is a writer and translator living in Quebec City. Her book *Les Maudits Anglais: A History of English-speaking Communities in Quebec City*, will be published by the Commission de la capitale nationale du Québec in spring 2005.

Et Cetera

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In Reconstruction Alabama, even a white Ontarian wasn't safe from the Ku Klux Klan.

Strange Fruit: The Martyrdom *of* William Luke

by Peter Meyler

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree – Galatians 3:13 (KJV)

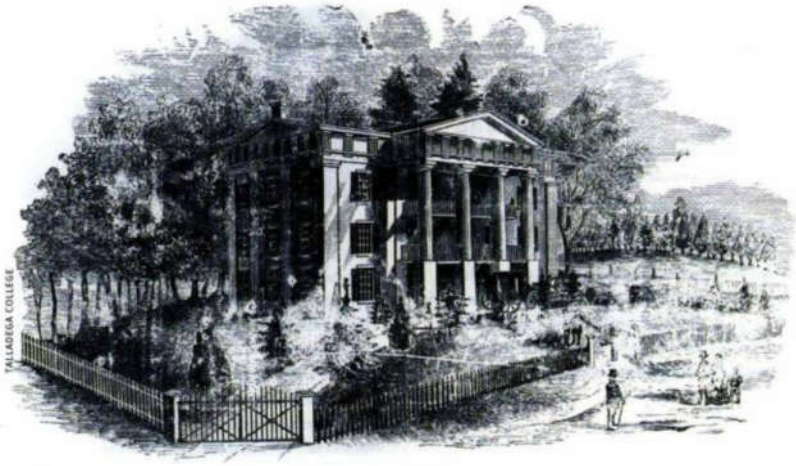
What was William Luke searching for in that southern sky? Redemption? Or maybe it was resurrection? It was summer 1869 and the former Reverend Luke was walking south along the dusty roads of Grey County, Canada West. Four years earlier he had been expelled from the Canadian Wesleyan Methodist Church. Now there was a chance to go back to saving souls, along with redeeming his reputation. The American South was going through reconstruction and it needed help.

William McAdam Luke was born in Ireland in 1831. Sometime afterward his family settled in Artemesia Township, Grey County, approximately 160 kilometres northwest of Toronto. Among the Scots and Irish who settled there were many blacks, both Canadian and American born. Prejudice was prevalent, but not insurmountable. These African Canadians raised families, created businesses, and prospered as best they could. Some of their children met and wed white members of the community.

An avid student, Luke learned French and German, in addition to reading, writing, and arithmetic. A devout Methodist, he had an early calling to the church; its egalitarianism was the foundation of his belief in the equality of people. In 1855, he became a part-time preacher. In June 1858, he was ordained at the Wesleyan Methodist annual conference in Montreal and that month married Fanny Irwin, the daughter of Irish immigrants and likewise a devout Methodist. They lived a comfortable life at first in the southern part of Canada West, but in 1862 they were posted to isolated Eganville in the Ottawa Valley, where there was no parsonage, no chapel, and hostility from German Lutherans who were opposed to the establishment of a new Methodist church. Though a visiting minister wrote "Bro. Luke is indefatigable in his work ... the right man in the right place," it turned out neither may have been the case: One of the German families charged the Irish Canadian minister with adultery. William provided no defence. (He later wrote that he preferred "to suffer a temporary wrong that the truth might vindicate itself.") And the Wesleyan Methodist district office found that "the charges preferred against W.M.C. Luke are fully sustained." The 1863 Wesleyan Methodist annual conference upheld the finding. The following year the charge was again investigated. The result was that "W.M.C. Luke be deposed from the Christian ministry and expelled from the church." The recommendation was carried out at the Elm Street Church in Toronto on June 2, 1864. Whether the adultery charge was true or not, the Lukes' marriage remained strong. That summer the Luke family, including five-year-old William Jr., three-year-old Annie, and one year-old Jack, moved in with Fanny's parents in Artemesia. William used his skills in farming, construction, accounting, and teaching to find work. But the burning need to preach, to save souls, was always present.

Five years later, Luke saw his opportunity to redeem his reputation in the aftermath of the American Civil War. Many Canadians had taken a great interest in the conflict, which had ended in 1865: Fanny's brother had joined the Union army and Artemesia's black settlers had family connections in the U.S. During Reconstruction, with the victors bent on transforming the infrastructure of southern society itself, American missionary societies in Ontario changed their focus from helping African American refugees in Canada to freed slaves in the South. In July 1869, Luke left behind his faithful wife and children and travelled to Cincinnati to the offices of the American Missionary Association, which had branches in both Ontario and in the American south. There, he had a fateful meeting with one of the AMA's enthusiastic educators, Henry Brown, who was founder and president of Alabama's first black college, Talladega College in Talladega, a town seventy-five kilometres east of Birmingham. The college was growing, and Brown needed help building, accounting, and teaching. After meeting Luke, Brown thought the lanky Canadian seemed to be the perfect man to provide help. Though William had little knowledge of Alabama's idiosyncrasies and the depths of its prejudices, he let faith lead the way and accompanied Brown to Talladega. There, he was an earnest and dedicated worker, lending a hand to whatever task was required. The college's green lawns and stone walls provided a sanctuary where the Canadian saw the resolve and enthusiasm of freed blacks to learn and grow, yet they muffled the rumblings of discontent of white Alabamans. Threats from the Ku Klux Klan and other ruffians were met with resolve and strength. Then, in the fall, William had another fateful meeting.

Reconstruction had attracted more than humanitarian missionaries like William. It also attracted northern industrialists – called *carpetbaggers* by southern residents – eager



Swayn Hall, the first building on Talladega College campus.

to expand their commercial empires. Among them were the Astors of New York, who had become at war's end major shareholders of the Selma, Rome & Dalton Railroad, the largest rail company in Alabama. Planning to link the rail route between Washington D.C. and New Orleans, they decided to create at Cross Plains, eighty kilometres northeast of Talladega, a new town called Patona that would be the railway's headquarters, an industrial complex, and the hub of transportation in the south. Skilled workers were needed for the railway, and a workforce of freedmen and northerners was the goal. Writing that a school was required to "improve the minds and morals of the negroes," the railway line's supervisor of construction, Captain E.G. Barney, travelled to Talladega College where he met an industrious Canadian named William Luke, whom he recruited to teach and minister in Patona.

By December 1869, Luke was living in the Patona Hotel writing hopeful letters to Fanny that they would be together again shortly. But southern hospitality was hard to find for Luke, the "nigger teacher," as he became known. To Alabama whites, the Canadian was eroding one of the few advantages poor southerners had over newly freed blacks – education. Alabama soon became a place of harassment for him. A few days after his arrival, angry residents met with the hotel proprietor, who asked him to leave. Luke found accommodation with a black family who lived close to the rail yard. He was shunned at the Cross Plains post office, and even northern workmen picked on him, swearing at him in public and ridiculing him with bawdy songs.

But the more sinister threat came from the Ku Klux Klan, which used physical intimidation, assault, and murder to resist northern initiatives. Their targets were blacks, northern carpetbaggers, and the southern collaborators they called "scalawags." Even the presence of Federal troops did not deter these sheet-clad nightriders.

"There is scarcely a day or night but that some acts of violence are committed on some person or persons within our county and who are beaten and ran [*sic*] off and sometimes murdered," local Republicans wrote to Governor William H. Smith about the worsening Klan activities. "And threats of violence and intimidation are of constant weariness. There have been a large number of families driven off from their homes within the last twelve months, and threats and intimidation have caused others to remain and labor where they do not want to stay.

"It does not make any difference what act of violence on a member of the Republican Party whether he is black or white, nothing can be done with him. It is utterly impossible for the civil law to be enforced in this county."

With little support from Alabama's white citizenry, the courts and law enforcement were effectively powerless to deal with Ku Klux Klan crimes. Barney wrote his own plea for help: "As we are now situated we would be comparatively powerless should any of these threats be carried out with execution by a band of disguised ruffians who are willing to take almost any steps to rid this section of men who are true to the government and its laws and have no interest in politics."

No troops were sent.

Luke was a particular target of harassment. In addition to the obvious indiscretion of teaching blacks to read, he was also said to teach that black women were equal to white women in God's eyes. He told his students to ask for the same wages as white workers. Other stories said that he was seen hugging a black woman and that he had fathered several children with black women.

Luke became a marked man. While in Jacksonville to attend a church opening, he was confronted and threatened by a mob of Klan supporters. Governor Smith asked him to report the incident to a grand jury, but Luke was unwilling to give any information, including the names of his tormentors. The Klan's intimidation tactics worked well, but not when it came to Luke's work. He even taught himself the telegraph so that he could teach blacks this latest communications tool.

Despite the danger to himself, his black friends, and anyone willing to help him, Luke carried on in the face of continued Klan intimidation, even when gunshots had smashed his bedroom window. However, it was a skittish mule that triggered the final act.

On Sunday, July 10, 1870, tipsy seventeen-year-old Patrick Craig thrust the reins of the family mule into the hands of Green Little, a black man lounging in the shade of the Cross Plains train depot. As the six o'clock train sounded its shrill whistle, the alarmed mule bolted down the road. Giving chase, Craig knocked down Little, who responded by picking up a rock and hurling it at him. Craig fell in the dirt but came back with a club, and with the help of his friends, began beating the black man. Green was able to escape as the train's passengers emerged, but vowed to return to settle the score.

Later that night, despite the entreaties of members of the black community and William Luke, Little and his friends

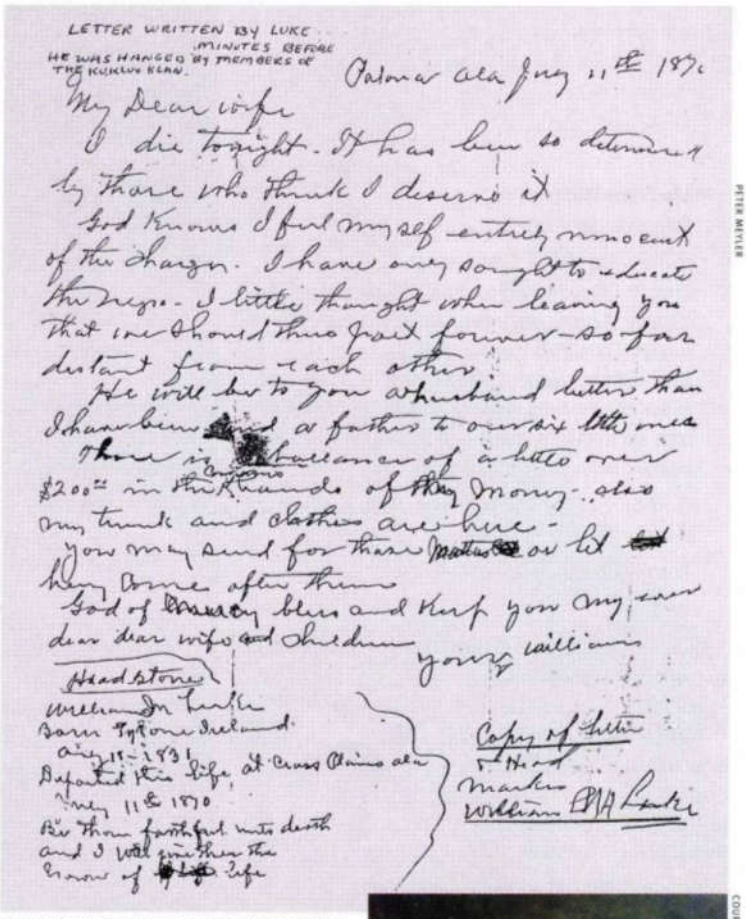
headed back to town, pistols in hand. Craig, meanwhile, gathered his own armed gang. When the two groups ran into each other, a short gun battle broke out that sent a group of Methodists coming home from church scurrying for safety. Craig chased Little out of town. But according to a farmer, Little claimed he would get "seventy-five well-armed men and return to wipe out and burn the damned town." In response, the whites formed a posse and by dawn apprehended four suspects, as well as Luke who had been seen talking to Little's group earlier. As a large crowd, including many Klansmen, milled around, the sheriff escorted the prisoners to a schoolhouse where a trial began. Before the hearing was adjourned at sunset, Luke explained he had tried to stop the violence, but also said he had sold a gross of guns on speculation to Little, knowing the blacks needed protection.

The prisoners were kept in town overnight under guard thought sufficient enough to deter Klan attack. However, since the prisoners were expected to be transported to Jacksonville the following day, the Klan summoned its members with a blazing fire on top of Chimney Peak. Forty riders gathered at a nearby Baptist Church.

As midnight approached, a ghostly procession drifted through the streets of Cross Plains. Sixty men disguised in white, yellow, and black costumes, most holding .44-calibre revolvers, surrounded the town's hotel where they believed the prisoners were being kept. (Cross Plains had no jail.) However, other Klansmen found their quarry on the porch of Nelson's store. Five of the guards slipped away on their approach, leaving only a single guard and a deputy. One Klansman pressed a revolver to the guard's head and grabbed his gun. Others seized the five prisoners. The mob grew steadily, murmuring the name "Lukie." Referring to guns he'd earlier sold Patona's black men, William Luke was heard to say, "I know I've done wrong, but I don't deserve this." The black prisoners knew that in the south a man didn't often get what he deserved.

The Klansmen, guns brandished, rushed the prisoners through town, across the railroad tracks to a grove, where they halted under a sturdy oak tree. With only enough rope to hang three of the men, the lynching took place in two shifts. The first three were roped up to the low hanging oak branches and hung from a standing position.

Luke asked his captors for time to write a letter home.* As the moon shone down, he took paper and pencil from his coat pocket. With the three first victims hanging only feet away, he wrote:



LETTER WRITTEN BY LUKE MINUTES BEFORE HE WAS HANGED BY MEMBERS OF THE KUKLUX KLAN.

Patona Ala July 11th 1870

My Dear wife

I die tonight. It has been so determined by those who think I deserve it

God Knows I feel myself entirely innocent of the charge. I have ever sought to educate the negro. I little thought when leaving you that we should thus part forever—so far distant from each other.

He will be to you a husband better than I have been and a father to our little ones

There is a balance of a little over $200.00 in the hands of [illegible] Money also my trunk and clothes are here—you may send for them or let [illegible] come after them

God of Mercy bless and keep you my own dear dear wife and children

yours William

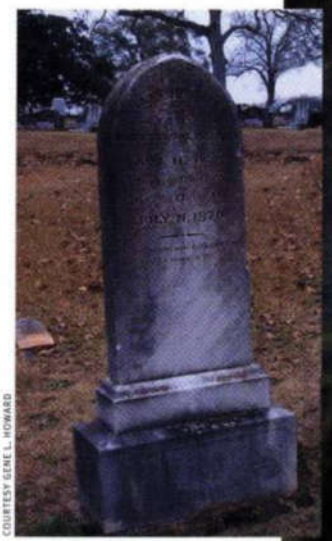
Head stone

William H Luke
Born Tyrone Ireland
Aug 15 1831
Departed this life at Cross Plains Ala
July 11th 1870
Be thou faithful unto death
and I will give thee the
Crown of Life

Copy of letter
to Head
Marker
William H A Luke

PETER MEYLER

Copy of William Luke's letter to his wife, Fanny (right), written minutes before his lynching, July 11, 1870. Fanny died in 1924, fifty-four years after her husband's murder.



COURTESY GENE L. HOWARD

COURTESY PHYLLIS ARMSTRONG

William Luke's gravestone at Talladega College, Talladega, Alabama. The epitaph is from Revelation 2:10: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

*Talladega president Henry Brown, who came to claim Luke's body, found the letter wedged in a splinter of a rail fence at the base of one of the oak trees.

My Dear Wife:

I die tonight. It has been so determined by those who think I deserve it. God only knows I feel myself entirely innocent of the charge. I have only sought to educate the negro. I little thought when leaving you that we should thus part forever so distant from each other. But God's will be done. He will be to you a husband better than I have been, and a father to our six little ones. ...

God of mercy bless and keep you ever dear, dear wife and children.

Your loving husband,

William

Two shots rang out, finishing off two of the swinging men, indicating that Luke's time was nigh. Ending his note, he knelt in prayer.

The Klan took down two of the men. Unsure how to handle a white man, they placed a mule under Luke rather than hang him from a standing position. The mob hesitated awkwardly until a former Confederate officer stepped forward, yelled, and slapped the animal away.

In part because a white man was among the victims, the Cross Plains lynchings caused a sensation. Newspapers in Alabama, then across the United States, editorialized on the tragedy, their judgments more inflammatory and supportive of the Klan the closer their newsrooms were to Patona. A court of inquiry ordered by the governor incensed the citizenry of Cross Plains and spurred the Klan to terrorize any who cooperated in the investigation. Northern employees of the railway were also harassed. In this hostile atmosphere, the Selma, Rome & Dalton Railroad closed its shop and abandoned the town. Stonewalled by the white citizens of Cross Plains, the court of inquiry adjourned in defeat. In 1888, the name Cross Plains disappeared when the Alabama legislature renamed the town Piedmont. By then memory of the events of 1870 was beginning to fade. ◘

Peter Meyler, an Orangeville, Ontario, researcher and writer, is the coauthor of *A Stolen Life: Searching for Richard Pierpoint.*

ET CETERA

Death at Cross Plains: An Alabama Reconstruction Tragedy **by Gene L. Howard. University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa, 1984.**

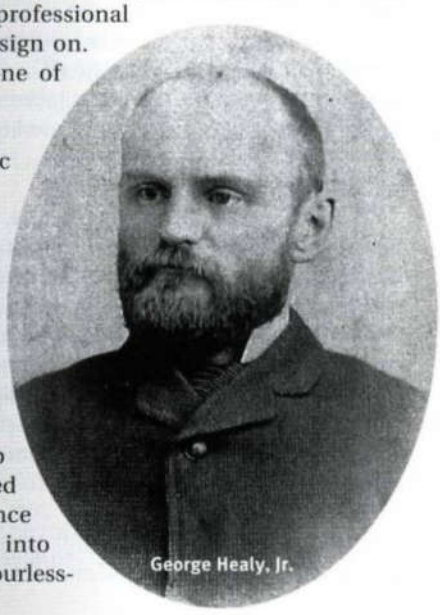
Chasing the Whale

by Darlene Polachic

On December 20, 1889, the whaling ship *Triton* towed out of San Francisco Bay. Among the thirty-six-member crew on board was George Healy Jr., originally of Port Hope, Ontario. He was thirty-eight that year, and what motivated him to venture to sea at this time in his life is unclear. *The Port Hope Guide* reported his December 20, 1871, marriage to Ida Hastings; five years later, it reported the death of their ten-month-old son Alvah George Healy when the family was living in Toronto. In an 1885 letter to his father, George Sr., he described his journey from Detroit to Butte City, Montana, but he mentioned no wife; she, too, may have been deceased. By 1891 – the year he wrote his father about his whaling adventures – he was living in Oakland, California, working as a compositor for the Pacific Press Publishing Company, which he called "the voice of the Seventh Day Adventist Church."

Why did he go to sea in 1889?

Perhaps the call of the open sea was in his blood. At one time, his father was a sea captain on the *Signet*, but George Sr. had given up that life some twenty years earlier to become the town clerk for Port Hope. Perhaps the opportunity came through the intervention of his father who, other correspondence suggests, knew one of the owners of the *Triton*, W.R. Wing. Perhaps George had fallen on hard times. Most of the regular hands aboard the ship were young and inexperienced, but it was not unusual for well-educated, even professional men in need of employment to sign on. George Healy may have been one of them.

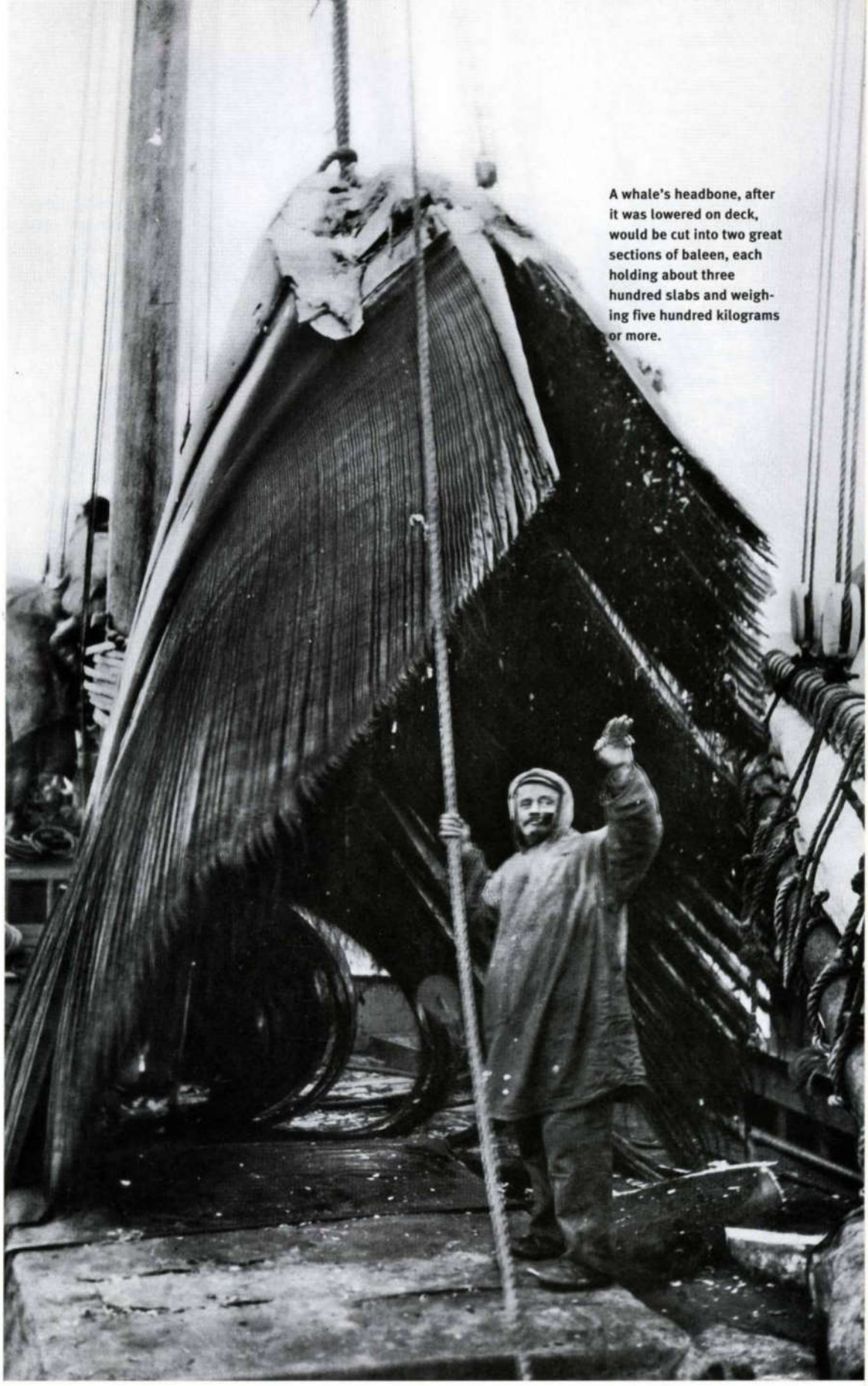


George Healy, Jr.

COURTESY OF THE WINNARAKER FAMILY

Paradoxically, Healy's Arctic whale-hunt adventure began with the *Triton*, a 251-ton barque described by Healy to his father as "an ugly looking craft," heading south. It stopped first to take on wood at the Maria Islands, about 100 kilometres from the Mexican coast, then headed further south to look for sperm whales. Found in deep waters, the sperm whale was prized for its spermaceti, a waxy substance found in the head, which, made into candles, burned brilliantly and odourless-

Some years ago, a yellowed letter penned in 1891 was discovered in an old trunk, glued to pages of the *Model Encyclopedia*. Written by George Healy Jr. to his father who lived in Port Hope, Ontario, the missive proved to be more than a nostalgic link to the Healy family's past. It contains a detailed, first-hand account of the voyage George Jr. took to Siberia on a whaling ship in 1889. The letter gives a frank look at the North American whaling industry, which was at its height in the nineteenth century.



A whale's headbone, after it was lowered on deck, would be cut into two great sections of baleen, each holding about three hundred slabs and weighing five hundred kilograms or more.

COURTESY OF THE WANNAMAKER FAMILY

George Healy, Sr.

ly with an almost smokeless flame – far superior to the wax or tallow candles of the day.

"All whalers that leave here in the months of November and December go south to look for sperm whales until it is time to go north for the spring, at which time of year whales are migrating to the Arctic region," Healy informed his father. "Another reason for leaving this port [San Francisco] so early and going south is to 'break in' green crews to the working of the ship and overhauling sails and rigging, etc so that by the time they start for the north everyone is supposed to understand his business."

According to Healy's account, the sailors spent much of the southward voyage fishing. Besides providing a gainful activity to fill their spare time, the catch offered some welcome variety to the sailors' dietary fare of hard tack (a hard, baked biscuit or loaf made from flour and water with no salt), salt beef (often horse meat), pork, and cheese.

The *Triton*'s circuitous route took it south, then west to the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands. They arrived in Honolulu harbour on March 13, 1890, nearly three months after embarking from San Francisco.

"Whalers very seldom anchor at Honolulu because if they did their crews would desert ship," he told his father, adding: "A whaler's life is not a very pleasant or happy one by any means and this is generally found out by green hands long before they get to Hawaii."

On March 18, after receiving supplies sent from San Francisco, the *Triton* headed for the Bering Sea. Weather made the voyage north a dangerous one.

"There was a gale blowing. ... I tell you we were just plowing through the water and it seemed almost impossible to keep her on her course. On the morning of the 23rd, the flying jib parted and the sail split. This caused a great commotion for a time as it made a terrible racket, but the damage was soon fixed up."

The further north the *Triton* progressed, the colder it got. In early April, she passed Fox Island in the Aleutian Archipelago. There was such a gale blowing at the time that "two men at the wheel could not keep the ship steady."

On the morning of April 16, the Siberian coast was sighted:

> *To say it was bleak, barren and cold with perpetual snow is a mild way to express it. It began to snow and it was not long before there was a foot of snow on the deck. ...*
>
> *The ice floe moving south was sighted on April 17 and [we] went into it on the evening of the same day. Seven other blubber hunters had got ahead of us and we had them for company. Visiting other ships is a great pastime of the officers as they have a great time drinking and smoking. Some of them are sure to get drunk. We had officers on our ship that were not any exception to the rule.*

Navigating through the ice was a dangerous and monotonous task:

> *"Port," "Starboard," and "Steady" is all you can hear and then when a hole of any size is reached. "By the wind" is the cry from the crowsnest. Then until another opening is found it is "Stand by the stays" or "Wear ship" until we get sick and tired of taking and laying up rigging. The ice encountered in the Behring Sea is very large, but no comparison to the Arctic ice. Ships have plenty of trouble getting through but it is a case of necessity in order to get to spring whaling grounds on time. Seals sleeping on the ice is a common sight and the officers amuse themselves trying to shoot them.*
>
> *I think the most innocent animal I have seen is the pup seal. These little fellows will look at a ship with great astonishment and some will swim toward it to see what it is. Then is the time the officers get in their sport – killing and wounding these innocent creatures. These are the hair seals. The larger ones that are killed are brought on board and take the place of fresh beef and I can assure you that seal meat is not "hard to take" after living so long on hard tack and salt horse (salt beef) varied down south occasionally with porpoise stew.*

All of this was small talk. Healy and his crew, like all the other whalers in the area, were primed and ready for the serious work of whaling. Every ship was anxious to be the first to sight a "blow" and make the first whale kill. The Triton's opportunity came on April 22 at 7:00 P.M.:

> *We lowered the boats for the first blow. Every ship carries five whale boats, three on the port side and two on starboard. These are equipped with all the necessary implements for capturing the fish. Harpoons, lances and lines as well as other stuff so crowd the boats that not much room is left for the crew. My boat, the first mate's boat, was the largest and was the newest and fastest of the five. Six men comprise a boat's crew, the boat steerer who stands in the bow with a harpoon ready to throw when close enough to a whale, an officer at the rudder and four men to man the oar when not using sail. As we were in a hole in the ice when we lowered, notwithstanding a stiff breeze blowing, the water was quite smooth but it was very cold.*
>
> *Soon after we left the ship we discovered that there were two whales spouting. Three other ships then lowered boats and scattered out waiting for the next rise. My mate saw one close to the ice and we immediately "got in fighting trim." We were about 200 yards away but it did not take long to get up to him. Our boat went clean over his back just as the harpoon was driven into him and the bow landed on a cake of ice. We were not long in getting clear of the ice and found that the whale was killed on the first*

clout. Fastened to the harpoon is a bomb gun attachment which forces into the whale's carcass as soon as the harpoon enters the blubber deep enough to press the trigger. The bomb contains explosive matter and a gas that soon kills the animal struck near a vital spot.

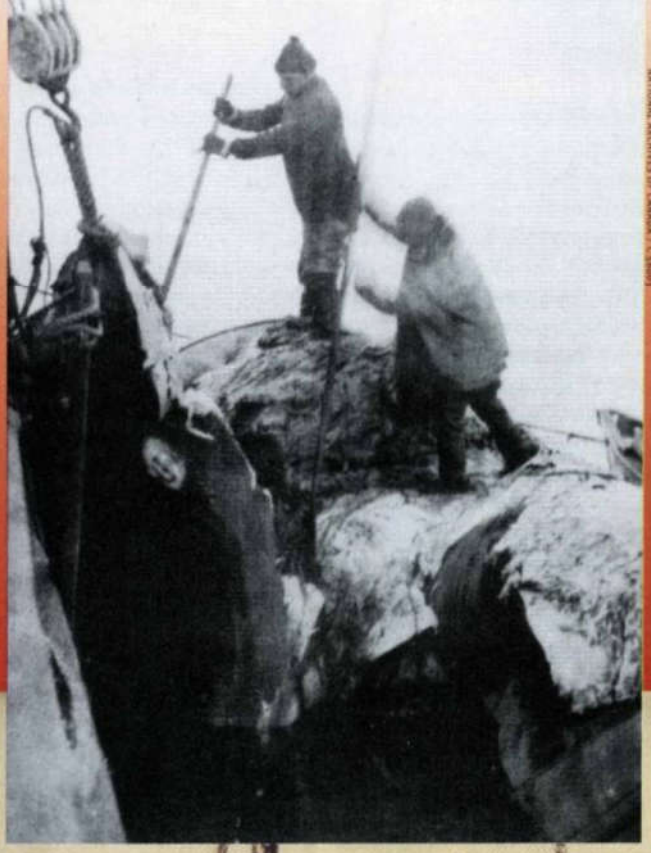
The bomb gun or darting gun that Healy mentions was invented in 1865 by Ebenezer Pierce, a New Bedford whaling captain. About fifty-three centimetres long and armed with a time-delay fuse, the bomb-loaded harpoon was fired from a shoulder gun by a mate standing in the bow of the whaleboat. When the harpoon was securely embedded in the whale, the bomb was detonated. The animal died quickly from massive internal injuries.[1] About fifteen metres long, the *Triton*'s first kill yielded over seven hundred kilograms of bone and eighty-five barrels of oil.

"There was great excitement in cutting in the blubber and getting the head on board ship," George wrote. "As a head of bone is valued all the way from $5,000 to $8,000 you can imagine that every precaution is taken."

Baleen or whalebone [see sidebar, page 30] was separated from the jawbone, piece by piece, using sharp wedges. Each piece was subsequently scrubbed clean, dried, bundled, and stowed away. The teeth from the lower jaw were removed and cut into chunks for the scrimshaw industry.

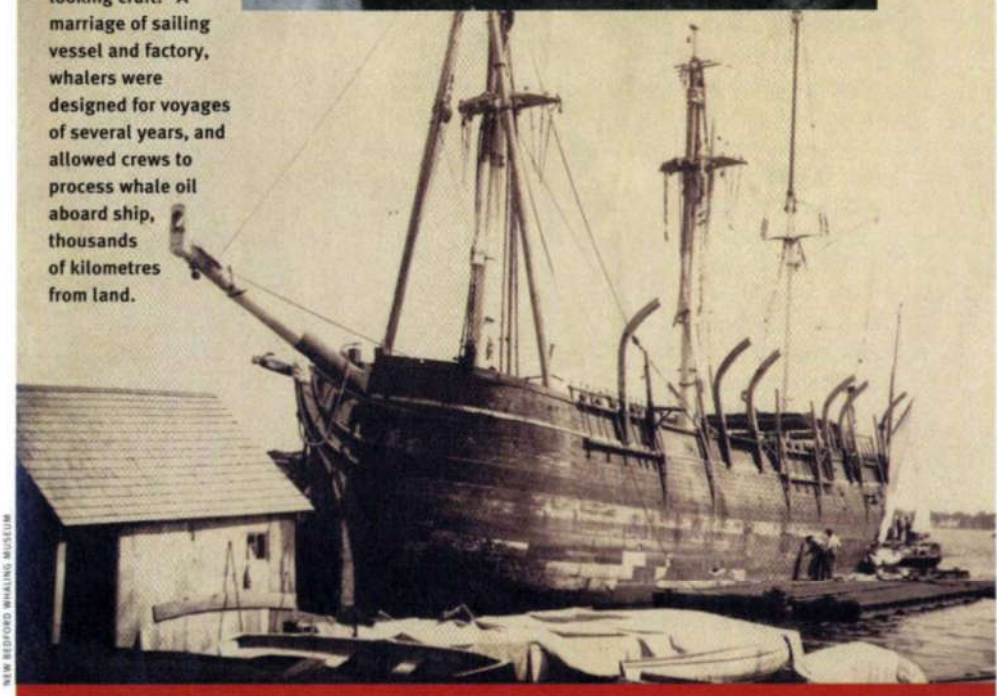
The process of stripping the carcass of blubber was known as *flensing*. It began as soon as the dead whale was lashed alongside the ship and the head was detached and hoisted aboard. One of the men steering the boat would clamber onto the whale's slippery

[1]Previously, the killing process was more drawn out. Harpooners would hurl their barbed lances into the whale, then chase it until it became weakened and exhausted. The chief harpooner had the honour of dealing the fatal blow. He took up a long spearlike lance and plunged it into the whale, churning it up and down repeatedly in search of the heart or lungs. When the blowhole spouted blood the harpooner knew a vital organ had been pierced. The whale went into violent death flurry, and then died.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-58003

Processing the whale began as soon as the dead whale reached the ship. The animal would be lashed to the side of the ship, where its head would be removed and hoisted aboard, then its blubber removed in strips. The headless carcass would later be released into the sea.



NEW BEDFORD WHALING MUSEUM

The *Triton*, which George Healy described to his father as "an ugly looking craft." A marriage of sailing vessel and factory, whalers were designed for voyages of several years, and allowed crews to process whale oil aboard ship, thousands of kilometres from land.

BOMB LANCES AND CARTRIDGES COMBINED.
These Guns and Lances are pronounced by all who have seen and examined them, to be SUPERIOR to all other kinds, and are recommended in the STRONGEST terms.
The Superiority of these Guns over all others, is that they can be Loaded and Discharged
TEN TIMES A MINUTE.

Golden Age of Whaling

The nineteenth century was the golden age of North American whaling, 1846 the busiest year. In the early part of the century, oil extracted from blubber was used in street lamps and for soap. After coal gas and petroleum replaced whale oil as an illuminant in the late nineteenth century, it continued to be used in the manufacture of soap, varnish, paint, and, later, margarine. A single Arctic whale could yield up to three hundred barrels of oil, worth $15 a barrel at 1850 prices.

But whales were hunted for more than oil. Certain subspecies supplied baleen, a horny substance, much like human fingernails, that grows from the whale's upper gums and is used by the animal to sieve food. Before the twentieth-century development of steel spring and plastics, flexible baleen, usually called whalebone, was used in the manufacture of skirt hoops, corset stays, umbrella ribs, fishing rods, buggy whips, and the like. In 1875, whalebone was worth $1.12 a pound; three years later it nearly tripled in value as hooped skirts and tightly corsetted waists grew more popular. In 1890, at the time of Healy's adventure, by-products from one good-sized whale could realize between $10,000 and $15,000.

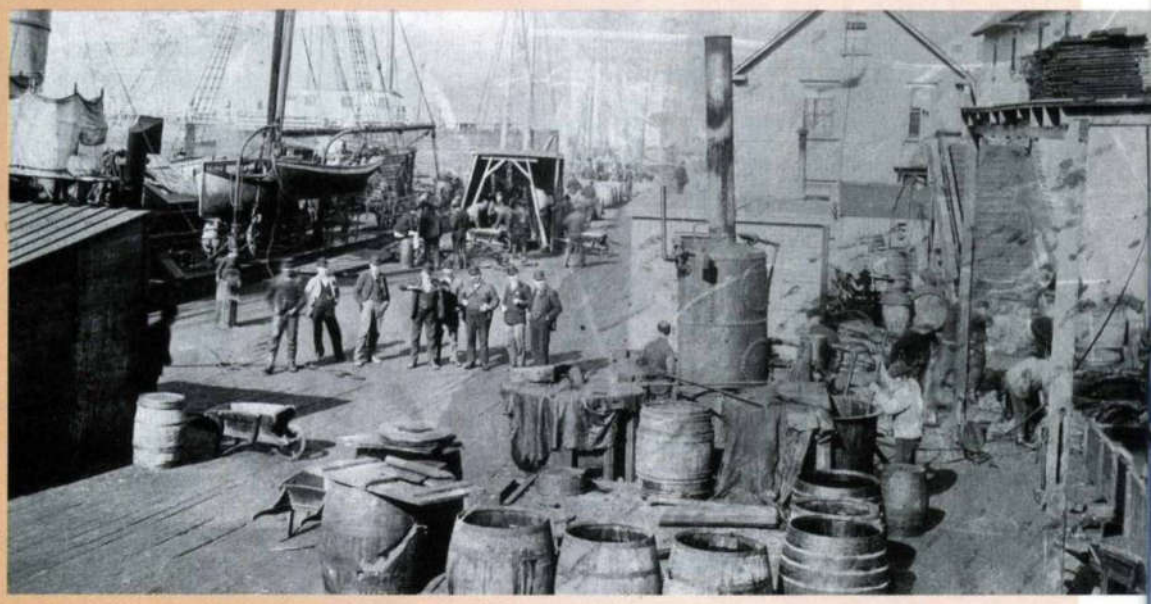
Occasionally a whale ship found a lump of *ambergris*, a waxy, amber-grey substance secreted in the lower intestine of the sperm whale. Weighing anywhere from a few ounces to several hundred pounds, this material commanded an extremely high price and was valued as an aphrodisiac, as well as a fixative in the perfume industry.

Whaling flourished first in the Atlantic Ocean, but as whale stocks where depleted, whalers turned their attention to the Pacific and then the northern seas. In 1848, the first whale ship sailed through the Bering Strait and discovered the rich new whale resources of the Pacific Arctic Ocean. During the 1870s, the Arctic fishery boomed, but by the time George Healy arrived in the Bering Sea in 1890, it was starting to wane. Though the whaling industry continued into the twentieth century, its viability shrank with the decline in the value of whale oil, the movement of fashion away from skirt hoops and corset stays, and the decrease in the number of whales. With the development of exploding harpoons, speedy catcher boats, and giant factory ships, whalers were able to scour the globe in search of their prey. Like any other natural resource, whales were harvested with little regard for their conservation.

Between the 1920s and 1970s, more than two million whales were killed and several species were reduced to the verge of extinction. Populations of blues, fins, humpbacks and seis in the southern hemisphere were ravaged. Sperm whale numbers were decimated. In the entire northern region, there are thought to be no more than a few hundred bowheads remaining, fewer than were slaughtered in one summer by whalers early in the nineteenth century.

Since the 1970s, the massacre has slowed. In 1982, members of the International Whaling Commission agreed to a moratorium on commercial whaling in order to assess the condition of the world's whales. The moratorium went into affect in 1986. It was recommended that the blue, right, and bowhead whale should be listed as endangered species and spared from further killing.

– D. P.



Before the advent of gas and electricity, whale oil was the preferred lighting fuel. It was also a superb lubricant, an industrial cleanser, and a basic ingredient in soap manufacture. Onboard processing of oil in huge cauldrons encased in brick furnaces revolutionized the whaling industry. Called tryworks, these cauldrons were used to boil down strips of whale blubber from a fresh kill. Casks were made aboard the ship so that whale oil could go straight from cauldron to the ship's hull. Later, the raw oil would be refined on shore.

back, cut a hole in the skin and blubber near the animal's eye, and insert a hook connected to a series of ropes and pulleys that were, in turn, attached to the ship's windlass. While flensers on the whale used their sharp spades to cut strips of blubber thirty to sixty centimetres wide, their counterparts on board would crank the windlass to peel back and lift the "blanket piece." Dripping oil and blood, it was winched above the deck where the strip was cut free and lowered through a hatch into the blubber room below deck. The hook was then attached to the next piece and the process began again. Slab by slab, the flensers stripped the blubber from the carcass until only a bloody mass of bones and entrails remained. The headless carcass was released to drift free and provide food for polar bears and other sea creatures.

Flensing was a dirty and unpleasant business. The sides of the ship became splattered with blood and fat, the rigging

was slick with oil, and the decks were so grimy and slippery it was almost impossible for crewmen to keep their footing. Sawdust was sometimes sprinkled around work areas to counter the problem, but it was soon tracked into the cabins and forecastle until the whole ship reeked with stench of whale.

As George Healy put it:

> *The cutting up part of the business takes several hours and everyone and the deck of the ship is nothing but oil and grease. It is impossible to get whale oil out of clothes.*
>
> *The blubber is "tried out" at once. Every ship carries two immense copper cauldrons set in a brick furnace with the necessary attachments for draining the oil into coolers before being barrelled up for the market. The trying out business is horrible work and when carried on during a heavy snowstorm with the thermometer hovering near zero F. it is not very pleasant.*

Blubber went rancid quickly and had to be "tried out" immediately. Crewmen armed with sharp cleavers cut the blanket pieces into small rectangular "horse pieces" that were sliced thin like the pages of a book. Known as "Bible leaves," these pieces were fed into the trypots and boiled until all the oil was extracted.

"Such," wrote George, "was the case with our first whale. The work is carried on night and day until it is finished. The blubber scraps are used for fuel in the tryworks and they make a very hot fire."

Following the *Triton*'s first catch, the crew was given an unexpected opportunity to rest. A storm blew up, effectively trapping the whaler in an ice jam. Once the ice loosened, the *Triton* continued on, inching its way slowly northward. On April 30, it came out at Cape Hagan on the desolate coast of Siberia. George wrote:

> *A handful of half starved natives subsist near Cape Hagen and as soon as we got near enough to shore they put off in their skin canoes or boats to our ship to trade what few furs they had for flour and tobacco. They were a forlorn looking lot and seemed to be almost starved. We gave them some hardtack and they fairly stuffed themselves with it. (*Kow kow *is their word for food.) ...*
>
> *The next morning our starboard boat killed the second whale and the trying out performance was again gone through. The capture of this whale was a blessing to those Esquimaux for the raw skin is a dainty dish for them and they just swallowed it whole, filling themselves and their canoes. We had whale meat and black skin several times. Being properly cooked it is quite good. The crew preferred whale meat to that of seal, and this is my choice also.*

Following the second kill, the *Triton* cruised around Cape Hagan for a couple of days, only to be caught in what Healy described as "a terror of a storm. Terrible wind sprang up at 2 A.M.. All hands were called to furl the sail. ... The way the ship did plunge and roll was something I shall never forget. The sea was running the proverbial 'mountains high' and every wave that broke over us froze as soon as it struck the deck. We got the sails under gaskets and scudded along under one topsail. We were uncomfortably close to land and had to get out into deeper water the best way possible."

Eventually the gale subsided and the whaler was able to continue. A few days later, they dropped anchor at Indian Point, also on the Siberian coast. There, Healy wrote, they found a great number of "Esquimaux," the best looking and the cleanest of any he had seen to that point:

> *Trading was the order of the day and the ship was swarming with them every day while we were at anchor.*
>
> *Twenty other ships were anchored there, all getting their skins and boots for their crews. The little boots I sent you this morning I got for two plugs of tobacco. The legs of all their boots are made of sealskin and the soles of walrus hide. Whalers put them on as soon as they can get them. They are very warm when worn with insoles and two pairs of socks. It would be impossible to go through a whaling cruise with ordinary leather boots or shoes. I suffered dreadfully from cold feet.*

The *Triton* spent several weeks cruising around the area, visiting St. Lawrence Bay and Port Clarence on the Alaska side, before heading north again. On the evening of July 5, it passed the Diomedes Islands and was at last in the Arctic Ocean.

They made a stop at Cape Lisbon where the crew spent three days hauling coal from a coal mine for the ship's donkey engine and the galley. At the same time, a tender sent from San Francisco replenished their diminishing supplies.

The *Triton*'s next stop was Point Barrow:

> *On this Point the government has a station and the revenue cutter "Bear" was laying off shore when we arrived. It is a long low point of land and barren is no name for it. Here we found between 100 and 200 natives who came from the interior at this season of the year to meet the ships and trade off their furs for flour, whiskey and tobacco. It is contrary to the law to give these natives liquor but it is done year after year. There would not be much difficulty finding out what ships furnished it. When the natives start in on a trade the first thing they ask about is liquor. If they cannot get this the next thing they ask for is tobacco and then comes kow kow.*
>
> *We stayed at Point Barrow until the 27th. The time being taken up with duck hunting, trading, visiting other ships and generally lounging around. ...*
>
> *We were not sorry when we weighed anchor to go to the west although this was the most dangerous part of the cruise, as it blows nearly all the time in the Arctic and the*

JOHN W. HARTMAN CENTER FOR SALES, ADVERTISING & MARKETING HISTORY / DUKE UNIVERSITY RARE BOOK, MANUSCRIPT, AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY

An insert card, one of 50 Scenes of Perilous Occupations, including whaling, placed in cigarette packages in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by North Carolina tobacco products manufacturer James B. Duke.

fall whaling is done in the open sea with no ice to break the force of the waves as in the Behring Sea. It now commenced to get colder and all hands were clothed in Esquimaux clothing from head to foot.

The Aurora Borealis was seen here in all its beauty and its appearance is a sure indication of a blow and sure enough the sign did not fail. We did not meet with much ice until September 15th when it began to get heavy. On the evening of the 18th we sighted Herald Island one of the most dangerous places in the Arctic Ocean. We did not linger around here very long. From the 1st of September it blew a gale almost all of the time with more or less snow. The forward rigging was one mass of ice and it was risky work going out on the jib boom to do any work. Every time a wave would come and break over it, it would add to the ice already formed on the rigging and deck. During this time it was almost impossible to keep the ship on her course. She would not answer the rudder and "the old man" (the most universal sobriquet among sailors for the captain) would get "on his ear" occasionally, but the crew as a general thing took no notice of him as neither he nor any of his underlings were liked.

On the 30th we got our fourth and last whale, and also on this day, our starboard boat capsized while fast to a whale, throwing the crew into the water. Fortunately our boat saw the occurrence and immediately started to their assistance. ... They were hanging on to the keel of the boat and we had quite a time getting them into our boat. The whale got away taking with it about 600 feet of line. In a day or two the men got over their ducking and could get around as well as any of us.

Young ice was beginning to form and the wind and cold was increasing so our skipper began to think about starting home. Whales were still numerous, but it would have been the height of folly to lower the boats in such seas as were running. On the 5th of Octber we "squared in" for home with a heavy northwester blowing.

It increased so that the bow boats were almost carried away with the waves and the larboard boat was almost smashed to pieces by one wave that struck us. On the 6th, 7th and 8th it blew a hurricane accompanied by snow. We passed the Diomedes on the afternoon of the 8th and on the 19th we were in the Behring Sea. The 10th and 11th were bad days for the crew as it was next to impossible to stand up or lie down.

The *Triton* dropped anchor back in San Francisco Bay at 4:00 P.M., November 5, 1890. Wrote George: "Everyone was glad to get back to civilization."

The whaling "cruise" had taken eleven months. All in all, it seems to have been an experience that Healy did not care to repeat. The last paragraph of the letter to his father articulates a profound distaste for the whole whaling business and those who participate in it:

> *I was intending to say something about the officers, but concluded not to. Our satellite (subordinate officers) behaved themselves pretty well. They understood that if anyone of the crew was ill-used it would be made interesting for them on their return to San Francisco. The officers of the whaling fleet, with very few exceptions, are a low, selfish unprincipled lot. They are nearly all drunkards and one of the captains who visited our skipper was so drunk when he was ready to go back to his own ship that he fell overboard in attempting to get into his boat. If anybody should ask my opinion of whaling I could not find adjectives strong enough to express my disgust of the business and those engaged in it. (Mr. W.R. Wing excepted).*
>
> *Although I made nothing out of the trip[2] I was glad to get back with my life. Two boat crews were lost last season, several men killed falling out of rigging and not a few died of disease brought on by exposure. It is a horrible life and no respectable man has any business on the deck of a whaler.* ▣

Darlene Polachic is a Saskatoon freelance writer.

ET CETERA

Men and Whales **by Richard Ellis. Knopf, New York, 1991.**

A History of World Whaling **by Daniel Francis. Viking, Toronto, 1990.**

Whales, Ice, and Men **by John R. Rockstoce. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1986.**

Great Ships: The Whalers. **A&E Home Video, 1996.**

[2]Crew members' wages, paid at the end of the voyage, were calculated as a percentage of the net value of the cargo, which averaged about $321.21 or 26 cents a day each. However, because sailors often took advances to purchase things such as tobacco, clothing, blankets, knives, or the like from the ship's store, they often returned owing more than they made.

Growing Their Own

Tobacco in Alberta? The nomadic Blackfoot people cultivated it in this unlikely place long before European contact. Curiously, the beaver played a role.

by Graham Chandler

One crisp October morning in 1754, Anthony Henday encountered a few Blackfoot scouts in the hills near present-day Lethbridge, Alberta. He sat under the autumn yellows and reds and smoked with them. When he visited their camp two weeks later to discuss trade, again protocol had it that he first sit and smoke, this time with the elders. Henday offered his favourite tobacco, but the native leaders preferred their own. "They think nothing of my tobacco," he later wrote in his journal. The feeling was mutual: he "set as little value on theirs, which is dryed Horse-dung."

Eighteen years later, Matthew Cocking, another trade envoy, was riding in the same hills when one of his Cree guides discovered a plot of tobacco. He wrote of it, "The Natives shew me a tobacco plantation belonging to the [Blackfoot] about 100 yards long & 5 wide, sheltered from the northern blasts by a Ledge of poplars; & to the Southward by a ridge of high ground."

In penning those lines, Cocking became the first person to record tobacco cultivation as practised by the Blackfoot.

Which was fortunate because a few generations later, by around 1800, the Blackfoot had abandoned their tobacco gardens and adopted their intruders' European blends. But

GLENBOW ARCHIVES / NA-4973-1

Two Blackfoot, Sun Calf (left, with tobacco pipe) and Jack Sun Calf, circa 1920. From the mid-seventeenth century to the period of European settlement, the Blackfoot nation occupied territory from the North Saskatchewan River to the upper Missouri River and from the foothills to roughly the Alberta/Saskatchewan border. The eighteenth-century explorers who encountered Blackfoot in the hills near present-day Lethbridge found tobacco crops at the extreme northern edge of the plant's growing range. But the Blackfoot had found ways to counter the climate's damaging effects.

smoking had long been part of Blackfoot ritual and spiritualism, and the Blackfoot had evolved the specialized knowledge needed to grow successful crops of a species in a land too harsh for it to grow naturally. The knowledge was passed on through oral traditions. Critical in this process were tobacco societies, which were typically composed of elders who were adept at the complex rituals associated with tobacco cultivation.

"The tobacco societies were in effect a horticultural society," says Eldon Yellowhorn, assistant professor of archaeology at Simon Fraser University and himself a Blackfoot. "Like people have for roses or orchids. They preserved the ecological information needed to produce successful crops of tobacco."

Although tobacco now has a negative stigma, Yellowhorn says that "in traditional Blackfoot society it was rather esteemed." Smoking of other herbs already had a ritual purpose before tobacco appeared on the northern plains around 1200 A.D., so the Blackfoot had the cultural background for accepting the product. "It was a habit on the northern plains for at least 3,500 years," he says, citing a dated find of a stone pipe at the Cactus Flower Site in southern Alberta by archaeologist John Brumley in 1973. "Blackfoot smoking pleasure was probably derived from a blend of bearberry [later known as kinnikinnick] and the cambium [inner bark] of red-osier dogwood, in a stone pipe." Accepting the practice of planting tobacco into their cultural system gave them access to a new herb that likely improved the flavour of these smoking blends, he says.

Smoking was primarily ceremonial, but "I imagine people would have their own times when they're not doing anything and just relax and have a bowlful of whatever they're smoking," says Yellowhorn. "But ritual use of smoke represents a spirit, like the creation myth where it's like Napi's [the Blackfoot mythical creator] breath – you actually see it. These are the connections with smoking. It's a physical manifestation of the spirit."

Though the Blackfoot tobacco societies used myth and ceremonies to help make sense of the investment of labour by surrounding the practice with a spiritual purpose, the spiritual connection wasn't tobacco's only focus. The societies likely dispensed it for medicinal purposes, too. "Medicines came out of its roots, the flowers, and you could brew the leaves to make an infusion to put on your sores," says Yellowhorn. "It was likely even smoked medicinally because it deadens the nerves."

The primacy of tobacco in Blackfoot society engendered intense ritual and ceremonialism associated with every step of its planting, protection, and harvest. The exact methods of cultivating the tobacco were closely guarded by the societies to ensure success. They also regulated trade because tobacco was a chief element in medicine bundles, which contained numerous items of spiritual significance.

Bundles, still a cornerstone of Blackfoot spirituality, were described by Clark Wissler in the 1911 Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, "The Social Life of the Blackfoot Indians." Wissler wrote that there are many different types of bundles, most of which contained tobacco. They were opened only for the most compelling reasons, such as calling the buffalo, performing the sun dance, or planting tobacco. The beaver bundle was most important to the tobacco societies: it contains every sacred object essential to the tobacco-planting rituals. According to Wissler, beaver bundles are filled with scores of items like beaver skins, a pipe, tobacco seeds and pouches of tobacco, buffalo ribs, tails and hooves, digging sticks, and muskrat and multitudes of other animal and bird skins. Accessories include sweetgrass and parsnip root for the smudge, black and red paints, rattles, rawhide, and counting sticks for keeping tally of the months. The whole package is wrapped in tanned elkskin and kept at the rear of the tipi resting on a parfleche filled with dried meat and a bag of dried berries. The owner's wife takes care of the bundle.

Planting tobacco involved ritual songs associated with the animal skins.[1] Dances, smudges, and painted faces

[1]Eldon Yellowhorn explains: "The different animals each contributed a song, and each skin in the bundle is the memory aid for that song. Many of the skins of birds are of those that migrate onto the northern plains in the springtime. Spring is very important in the bundle opening. My feeling is there is a correlation between the types of animals that hibernate and become active after winter."

GLENBOW ARCHIVES / NA-[illegible]

A Blackfoot ceremonial bundle, 1926. The religious life of the Blackfoot centered upon medicine bundles and their associated rituals. These bundles were individually owned, transferable, and often originated from an encounter with a supernatural spirit, usually in the form of a vision quest in which a young man would go out to some lonely place and fast until he had a vision. Bundles could also be purchased, if a society member was willing to sell.

accompany the ceremony. There were about four hundred songs in all, accompanied only by rattles beaten on leather. Words in the tobacco songs include: "Tobacco seed, I want it. It is powerful. ... Tobacco seed, I want it. A plenty I have taken. It is powerful. ... Tobacco leaves, I have taken. It is powerful. Old Man, he says, 'The plants, let us go over there' [referring to the tobacco garden] ..."

And so the tobacco-planting ritual began. No account of a westerner observing one is on record, but Wissler recorded from a number of Blackfoot informants:

The holders of the beaver bundles, or "beaver men," hold a four-day dancing and feast and send out "eight single young men to gather deer, antelope and mountain sheep dung, because these animals run fast and so the tobacco will grow fast." The dung is mashed up with berries and tobacco leaves into which the seeds are placed with water.[2] The mixture is distributed among the planters who are both men and women. Brush is gathered and burned on the plot. Sometimes willow branches were used to mix the ash with the soil.[3]

After the burning, with digging sticks or bison scapula hoes, "holes are dug about a foot apart and two inches deep in a row, into which are placed the seeds and covered by children running over them four times," recorded Wissler.[4] "A child cannot fall or ... ill luck will follow." After the planting, special songs are sung and four smudges lit, one on each corner of the plot. Camp is then broken in preparation for a spring departure of the entire group for a summer away hunting and gathering.

While they're away, they must camp in four different places of increasing distances from the garden while mythical "little people" tend to the crop. "Some say the seeds are the

[2]In a practical sense, of course, the dung wouldn't have to come specifically from deer, antelope, or mountain sheep – it served merely as a fertilizer for the tobacco crop.

[3]Yellowhorn explains this step: "The seed case around the tobacco seed has to be leached off. The ash dissolved the case off the tobacco seed.

[4]This ritual may have had its origins in the need to lightly tamp the soil after planting.

Blackfoot tobacco ceremonies in southern Alberta, circa 1943–1944 (far left) and circa 1910. Like other Plains cultures, the Blackfoot had age-graded men's societies, each with its own distinctive songs, dances, and regalia. The tobacco society had exclusive responsibility for the cultivation of tobacco, which had both medicinal and ceremonial value. It served as a stimulant, a hunger and thirst depressant, and an analgesic. It was used in seeking visions, spirit consultation, healing, and purification rites. It was present at nearly every important function – ratifying peace treaties, sealing friendships, and confirming sales or other agreements. Tobacco offerings might also be made for favourable weather, good hunting, planting, or successful courtships.

dwarf people," wrote Wissler. "No one must ever try to see the little people for if you do you will die."[5] At the fourth campsite, the women make tiny moccasins about five centimetres long and bags of food about seven centimetres long and put them out for the little people. The group then spends the rest of the summer hunting and gathering.

GRAHAM CHANDLER

Eldon Yellowhorn is a unique archaeologist. A Blackfoot born and raised in the tiny town of Brocket on the Peigan reserve of southwestern Alberta, he grew up learning traditional lore from elders as well as what archaeologists were discovering about his heritage. He pursued the two, trying them together for a doctoral thesis in the cerebral world of theoretical archaeology at McGill University, which granted him Canada's first PhD in archaeology to a native Canadian. Today he is assistant professor of archaeology at Simon Fraser University.

No archaeological evidence has been found of Blackfoot tobacco gardens. But carbonized seeds have been recovered at many sites along the Missouri River, including the Travis site in north central South Dakota, that were first cultivated about a thousand years ago. Indeed, the origin of the Blackfoot tobacco societies' ceremonies and methods of cultivation are thought to have derived from the Crow Indians of the Missouri area. "The Crow Indians have a long tradition of growing tobacco," says Yellowhorn. "The Blackfoot adopted some of their rituals and knowledge and plant lore to cultivate tobacco into their societies."

Descriptions of Crow ceremonial planting of the tobacco were recorded by anthropologist Robert Lowie and published in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History in 1919. He notes that, unlike the Blackfoot, the Crow at that time still planted their own tobacco for ceremonial purposes. Lowie recorded that although the Crow rituals differed slightly, the Blackfoot and the Sarcee were the only other tribes with ceremonial tobacco planting.

Perhaps some of the differences arose from a factor the Crow of the Missouri didn't have to worry about: Blackfoot territory lay at the extreme northern edge of the plant's growing range with the ever-present danger of killing frosts. And here's where they got help from the beaver, says Yellowhorn. As well as the mythical bringing of the original tobacco seed, the beaver and its aquatic habits played a leading role in ensuring the success of the crop by imparting information crucial for timing and locating tobacco.

Beaver habitat on the plains is restricted to forested valleys where the high water tables can support lush and woody vegetation such as aspen and poplar. This is also where tobacco gardens produce best, and it obviates any need to stick around for irrigation. Beaver prefer backwater channels that flood periodically, forming deposits of well-drained sandy loams suited to tobacco plants. And a local microclimate is created by a canopy of sheltering trees adjacent to the riverbanks, which protects young shoots against sudden late spring frosts or blizzards. The water releases its latent heat under the cooler temperatures to insulate the new plants. "So the ecology of the beaver was a perfect match for the ecology of the tobacco," says Yellowhorn.

To help pull it all off, some kind of reliable calendar was needed. Wissler recorded sets of sticks being used to keep tally of the days for planting. "They claim twenty-six days for a moon and four days for which the moon is invisible, making a period of thirty days," he wrote. Yellowhorn says that would have been very close to the modern measurement of 29.53 days for a lunar month. Counting the seven moons of winter began when the leaves turned yellow. Seven moons of 29.53 days comfortably passes the vernal equinox, so the final new moon of winter would be around the middle of April, and that's when plans would begin for the planting ceremonies.

According to Wissler's observations, when the band returned in the fall, four young men were first sent ahead – one to each corner of the plot to pull up a tobacco vine. These they took back to the beaver men (of the tobacco society) at the approaching camp for inspection. Satisfied, the band would head back to camp for a four-day feast. The beaver men would then harvest, dry, and cut the tobacco for winter storage.

Today, many of the planting and harvesting rituals are still performed and held sacred by the tobacco societies, though they no longer serve any practical purpose. Bundles contain tobacco in tubes or containers; it's never loose. And still, meetings with Blackfoot people traditionally open with tobacco. When medicine pipe and beaver bundle owners open their bundles at the first sound of spring thunder, people at the opening are given tobacco. "Distributing tobacco to those in attendance is an essential communion between host and guests," says Yellowhorn. Regardless of how it tastes, Anthony Henday and Matthew Cocking would surely agree.

Graham Chandler is a Calgary writer.

[5]This belief may have originated to dissuade anyone from raiding the garden.

ET CETERA

The Story of the Blackfoot People **by The Blackfoot Gallery Committee. Key Porter, Toronto, 2001.**

Mythology of the Blackfoot Indians **by Clark Wissler and D.C. Duvall. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1995.**

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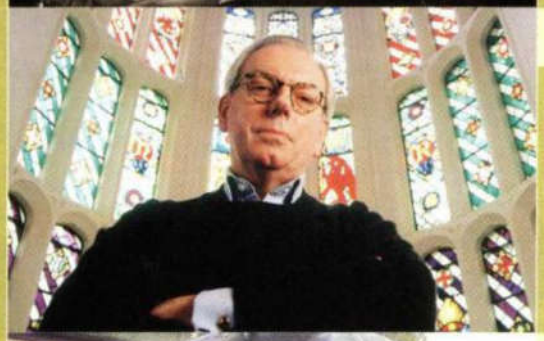

Medieval Monarchs | **Sundays at 8 p.m. ET beginning February 13**

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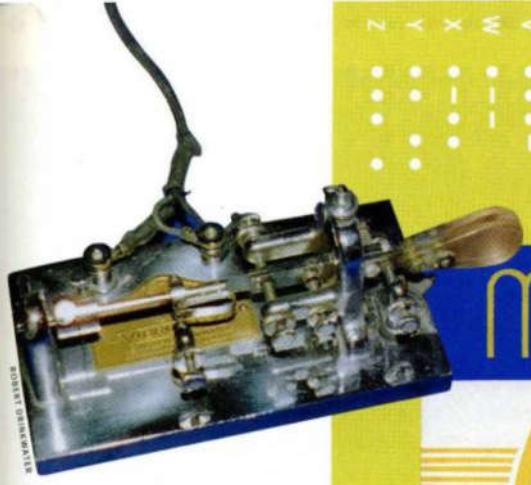


ROBERT DRINKWATER

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY ARCHIVES / A.6711

Morse code, an elegantly simple system of dots and dashes, was once the protocol for the world's first Internet – the international telegraph network whose cables spanned the globe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ironically, it is today's computer Internet that is helping keep one of the Morse code variants – railway Morse – alive.

Code of the Rail

by Robert Drinkwater

Retired railway employees Ab Krauter and Jim Munsey remember the day over thirty years ago when they held a tape recorder up to catch the sounds made by the telegraph key at the Canadian National Railways offices in Edmonton. The men knew the lines would soon fall silent – new railway employees hadn't been required to learn Morse code since the 1950s, and the CNR was keeping telegraphs operational only as a backup to its phone system. By 1970, the familiar clacking noise of a message being relayed by telegraph was extremely rare, and two years later the wires went completely silent when the keys were removed.

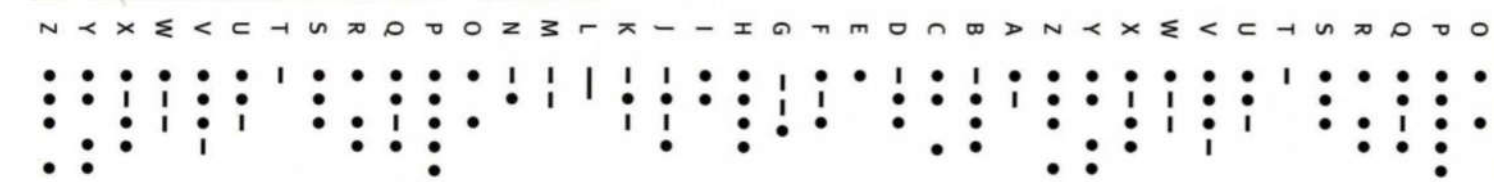
"It was so gradual, no one really noticed when they were finally gone," says Krauter. "We thought we'd record the sound for posterity."

Now, more than three decades later, Krauter, Munsey, and hundreds of other retired telegraphers across Canada have reconnected Morse keys to computer modems and are sending messages to each other along telephone lines that they access through a free, long-distance, dial-up hub.

It's a vital link for the former railway men and past employees of Canada's telegraph companies because they are the last of a dying breed trained in railway Morse code, sometimes referred to as "American" Morse. Railway Morse is the original code that was developed by Samuel Morse and his partner Alfred Vail in the 1840s, but it's different than the international Morse that's still used by mariners and ham radio operators today.

Railway Morse was the basis for international code, but the original had been altered by eleven letters when it was adapt-

The Vibroplex key (top left) permitted high-speed sending of signals using side-to-side movements, which eased the potential for carpal-tunnel syndrome that afflicted so many operators who manipulated a straight key in the standard up-and-down fashion.



Conceived by American inventor Samuel Morse in 1832, the telegraph and the code named for him dominated technological communication from 1850 to the 1920s, and continued as an important method of transmitting information throughout most of the twentieth century. In Canada and the U.S., American or railway Morse (shown in upper margin) remained the standard among land operators working over telegraph wire rather than via radio signals. A variant called Continental or International Morse, however, became the universal standard for radio telegraph communication. The switch to satellite-based communications systems at sea beginning in the 1990s has marked the end of the last significant international use of Morse. Today International Morse code is almost exclusively the province of amateur radio operators. Railway Morse is largely an avocational interest of Canadian and American railway enthusiasts.

ed for use by European railways. The reason for the change was that Vail and Morse had designed their code so that the most commonly used letters would be assigned the fewest number of dots and dashes. That was fine for English, but German telegraphers realized their most common letters were different, and their modified code was adopted by the Austro-Germanic Telegraph Union in 1851.

This Continental version of the code, now known as international Morse, gained wide acceptance in the twentieth century when radio technology permitted dots and dashes to be carried to ships at sea without the need for wires or cables. Some telegraphers say international Morse was chosen because it was less prone to confusion when it was sent using tones. (On a telegraph wire, dot and dash sounds are produced by a hammer called a sounder that moves when the circuit opens and closes.) However, railway Morse continued to be used in the United States and Canada. According to some telegraphers, messages in railway Morse could be sent about 20 percent faster than they could with the newer code.

While fluency in international Morse is still required for amateur radio licences and some mariner tickets, virtually no one has learned railway Morse in half a century. The youngest people who can still use it, like Krauter and Munsey, are now in their seventies.

"There are fewer of us every year," Krauter laments. "To us, it's like a second language."

"I would say in ten years, there won't be any of us left," Munsey adds.

For more than a hundred years, railway Morse code was the language that carried most of North America's urgent long-distance information. News dispatches from local correspondents, telegrams to family members announcing births and deaths, and bulletins about the amount of grain in prairie elevators were all communicated by the continuous tapping of telegraph operators. For railways, Morse messages told engineers if it was safe to proceed along single lines of track, sparing them from having to wait unduly long times on sidings while opposing trains passed. Train orders, which informed engineers when they had to stop for cargo or passengers, could be wired by telegraph to station agents who transcribed the messages and passed them to the engineers – often while trains were still moving.

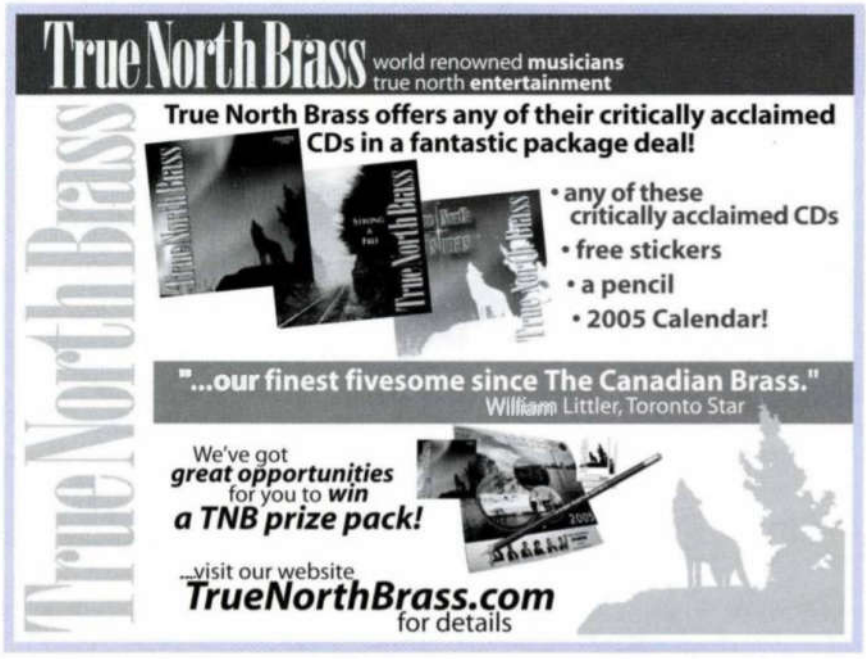
Originally, Morse telegraphs produced a paper copy of the dots and dashes they received, but telegraph operators quickly learned to decipher the code directly from the noise of the sounders. Canadian railways set up classes to teach Morse code and private colleges also offered programs, but one of the most common ways telegraphers learned their trade was from older relatives who worked for the railways.

Munsey got his first Morse lessons when he was just eight. As the son of a station agent in Hannah, Alberta, he was ordered by his father to learn telegraphy when he quit piano lessons. He says his father was looking for a way to mollify his sister, who complained bitterly when she was forced to continue with her music lessons.

Munsey says he didn't even know there was a difference between railway and international code until he joined air cadets at age sixteen. He says the squadron adjutant, upon learning Munsey knew Morse code, immediately promoted the new recruit and gave him the job of teaching Morse to other cadets.

Both got a surprise on the first day of training.

"The air force uses international code. When I hit the key, I got a beep instead of a click," Munsey recalls, "I continued to send the code, and the adjutant stopped me and said, 'You're not sending it right.' I said I was, and at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ROBERT DRINKWATER

Jim Munsey demonstrates the "Victorian Internet" for children at Fort Edmonton Park. His key is hooked up to a telephone modem that carries his message to a telegraph operator in another part of the park.

that point, we realized we knew two different codes."

"He told me if I didn't learn the 'right' code by the next meeting, he'd take away my stripes. So I learned the international code pretty fast."

Krauter, meanwhile, began learning Morse in 1940 when he was fourteen. His father worked in the freight office of the CNR in Dauphin, Manitoba, and the railway hired him to deliver telegrams and other messages around town. At night when the telegraph lines were quiet, he was permitted to practise his Morse skills by sending and receiving messages with station agents along the line.

Krauter remembers it took at least six months of constant Morse practice before he could keep up with other agents. He says when telegraphers reached that stage, they bought their own special keys, known as "bugs." The bugs were different from keys supplied by the railways in that they enabled operators to send multiple dots with a single push, similar to the automatic fire from a machine gun.

Time was money on a telegraph line, so operators also improved their speed by shortening messages with abbreviations. The Phillips code, developed by a telegrapher with the Associated Press in the United States, was also used by Canadian railways to shorten words like "very" to "VY" and "paid" to "PD." Krauter says for telegrams, the number 31 was used to represent "darling." A 32 meant "All my love," and a 33 meant "All my love, Darling." The full words were later typed onto the messages that were delivered to the recipients.

The fastest telegraphers worked for commercial telegraph companies. Both Canadian Pacific and Canadian National had telegraph agencies, and their telegraphers could send and receive messages at a rate of up to forty words per minute compared with the average station agent speed of only twenty-five.

George Kennie remembers rows and rows of telegraphers at the CN Telegraph office in Edmonton when he started work there in 1939. The telegraphs were noisy, and it was often difficult to hear the particular one you were trying to listen to, so Kennie says operators amplified the sounders by placing tobacco tins behind them. Operators used typewriters to print the messages onto telegram forms, further adding to the din.

Kennie says commercial telegraphers were proud of their skill, and he says some telegraphers could carry on conversations in the office while transcribing messages from the wire. There was even a rumour of a telegrapher who could send an outgoing message with one hand while transcribing an incoming message with the other.

Anyone could learn Morse, he says, but not everyone had the skill to be a commercial telegrapher.

"It's like musicians – some people never get beyond the scales while other people become concert pianists," Kennie says.

"If a guy wasn't a good operator, they'd say that guy was a 'lid.' They'd say 'Somebody get the lid off that line.'"

Not every message made it through cleanly, though. Munsey recalls one station agent trying to relay news from an engineer about a damaged section of track near Dobson – a small station east of Kindersley, Saskatchewan. The engineers measured distance by the telegraph poles, and the message was supposed to read, "Bad spot in track. Six poles east of water tank, Dobson." The disturbing message that got delivered began, "Dad shot in back. Six holes ..."

He also recalls a bungled birth announcement that read, "Baby boy born this morning. Both *will* live." It was supposed to have said, "Both well, love."

Morse became less common in the 1950s as Canadian railways switched to telephones for relaying train orders, although telegraphs continued to be used on many branch lines through the 1960s. In commercial telegraph offices, Teletype machines replaced telegraph keys and sounders, and operators were trained for other work.

Munsey, Krauter, and Kennie believed they would never use Morse again. Now, they keep in touch by tapping messages to each other almost every day via their dial-up network. Ironically, their messages are being carried across the vast microwave and fibre-optic telephone system that replaced Morse technology.

The men also keep Morse alive with demonstrations at museums and historic villages. Children are as fascinated by the typewriters sitting on their desks as they are by the Morse keys, while older people recall fondly the familiar sounds of a railway office.

For retired telegraphers, the clacking truly is a language.

"Some guys in our club, they put words together and it sounds like music," Kennie says.

Robert Drinkwater is an Edmonton writer and copy editor for Canadian Press.

ET CETERA

Lightning Man: The Accursed Life of Samuel F.B. Morse **by Kenneth Silverman. Knopf, New York, 2003.**

Your Introduction to Morse Code**, audiocassette by American Radio Relay League, 2001.**

The Irish Princess

Sheila NaGeira may evade historians' scrutiny, but she remains a vital figure in Newfoundland's folk culture. In Carbonear, where legend has it she lived, her name is attached to a number of institutions and events.

Reclaiming facts from the web of folklore is seldom an easy task. The legend of Sheila NaGeira, the "Irish Princess," said to be the first European woman to give birth in Newfoundland (after the Vikings) is particularly rich with colourful yet conflicting details.

Sheila is variously known as the island's first schoolteacher, a midwife, a herbal doctor and, according to some accounts, a fearless defender of her Carbonear home against both unfriendly natives and the French. Many of these images come to us through the four-hundred-year fabric of oral history. They are supplemented by historical research, some adventure fiction, and reinforced by the literature of a thriving tourism industry.

The version of the story most often repeated is the one found in the highly regarded *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*. The details are these: in 1602 Sheila was a young Irish noblewoman en route from France, where she had been studying in a French convent run by her aunt, an abbess. Taken prisoner in the English Channel by a Dutch privateer, she was rescued by Peter Easton, an English privateer loyal to Queen Elizabeth I. Easton's fleet was on its way to Newfoundland to protect the English fishing fleet there, and took its rescued prisoners to the New World. En route, Sheila fell in love with Gilbert Pike, one of Easton's lieutenants, and they were married. Pike left Easton's employ, and he and Sheila became "planters," small-business owners in the fishery, in a place called Mosquito (now Bristol's Hope) on Newfoundland's Avalon Peninsula. They moved to nearby Carbonear Island in 1611 to escape the return of Easton who, under the reign of James I, had lapsed into piracy. When Easton's pirates left Newfoundland in 1613–1614, Sheila and Gilbert returned to the area near Mosquito that later became known as Carbonear.

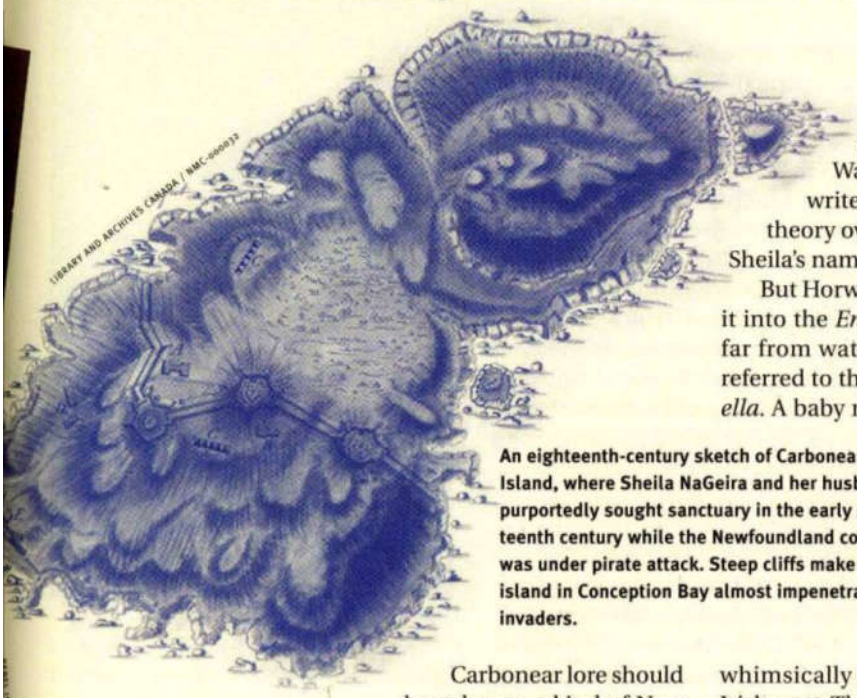
NaGeira (Nagueira or Na Geira), according to this version, was an epithet meaning "the beautiful." Sheila was actually an O'Connor, the daughter of a claimant to the Irish throne of Connaught, hence the nickname, the "Irish Princess."

The problem with this story as history is that, over the years, original documentation and records have stubbornly refused to confirm any of the facts. Those who try to verify Sheila and Gilbert's existence have taken comfort from a census in 1681 that mentions a Pike in Carbonear with no children, ten employees, and two boats – a fragment of factual evidence that at least confirms the early presence of a Pike family in a social position similar to that which Gilbert and Sheila would have found themselves had they indeed landed in Mosquito in 1602–1603 as planters.

The thinness of the historical record has created an overreliance on oral history, which, in turn, gives rise to some unique problems. Versions of Sheila's story are manifold and contradictory. One account has Sheila leading the battle for Carbonear against the French in 1697, almost a century after her supposed landing in Newfoundland. So disparate are these oral accounts that there were at one time quite serious claims that a weathered ancient gravestone with the only legible date reading 1753 marked Sheila's burial place. The controversy continued until 1982 when the Canadian Conservation Institute confirmed that, although a Pike (John) was buried there, the crumbling stone made no mention of a Sheila.

It's easy to see why the various legends of Sheila should have taken on a life so far beyond the confines of plausibility. The date most quoted for her landing (1602–1603) is highly significant. The first official record of a European baby born in Newfoundland was in March 27, 1613, to a Mr. and Mrs. Guy (or possibly Gore). If Gilbert and Sheila had children, as they are reputed to have done, the event was likely to have preceded this and they would have been Newfoundland's first family – and Sheila the mother of the "nation" of Newfoundland. It is no wonder, perhaps, that

Fact meets fiction in the legend of Newfoundland's Sheila NaGeira. by Paul Butler



An eighteenth-century sketch of Carbonear Island, where Sheila NaGeira and her husband purportedly sought sanctuary in the early seventeenth century while the Newfoundland coast was under pirate attack. Steep cliffs make this island in Conception Bay almost impenetrable to invaders.

Carbonear lore should have her as a kind of New World Joan of Arc, fighting foreign invaders and performing minor miracles in healing the sick with herbal remedies. Perhaps the Irishwoman who left Europe behind in the dying days of the Elizabeth I replaced the Virgin Queen in the hearts of the partly English population of succeeding generations. Perhaps she became, like Queen Bess, a mythical icon and a figurehead of the oldest religion in the world – goddess worship.

But what remains a curiosity is the number of fairly precise details that have been incorporated into the legend. The twentieth century saw many writers contributing to the story, clarifying and systematizing the existing myths of Carbonear. The first of these seems to be a local historian, William Munn, who gathered many strands of folklore in the area. Much later on, Harold Horwood (notably in his 1984 book *Pirates and Outlaws of Canada*) made efforts to take the tale and embed it into known history. It was Horwood who first argued, from largely undisclosed research, that Sheila was the O'Connor of the royal line and the name "NaGeira" meant "the beautiful." That she should be known as "the beautiful" just as William was known as "the Conqueror" and Edward "the Confessor" echoed a royal tradition and, for Horwood, reinforced the theory that she was indeed a princess.

While Horwood researched and argued historical likelihoods, it was the popular Newfoundland pirate-story writer P.J. Wakeham who, deriving his information from the oral histories of the Pikes in the area, is more responsible than anyone for popularizing the tale. His novel, *The Legend of Princess Sheila*, first published in 1958, has Sheila as the stoical leader, guiding and teaching her people, and acting as a general in Carbonear's resistance to the great French Canadian naval captain, Pierre Le Moyne D'Iberville, in 1697. Wakeham, who billed himself strictly as a popular writer and not a scholar, later deferred to Horwood's theory over Sheila's name. In a 1987 reprint, he changed Sheila's name to O'Connor.

But Horwood's theory about the name, although making it into the *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, is far from watertight. A hundred years ago, the Pike family referred to the legendary Sheila not as NaGeira but as *MaGella*. A baby named after Sheila and born in 1917 was given her name, which was by then spelt *MaGeila*.

It appears to have been Newfoundland Museum curator Leo English in the 1940s (notably in an article in the June 1949 edition of the scholarly *Newfoundland Quarterly*) who decisively fixed Sheila's surname as NaGeira by whimsically identifying her with the popular song by the Irish poet, Thomas Moore (1779–1852). For Moore, the name *Sheila NaGeira* was likely to have been entirely symbolic, as Sheila was an affectionate term for Ireland. So the name literally meant "Ireland, the beautiful."

From a folkloric point of view, whether a story is true or not is far less important than how it came into being. But even people who search for historical evidence of Sheila can gain comfort from the fact that while it seems impossible to verify her existence, the fog of Newfoundland's early history makes it equally difficult to rule out any theory entirely. Far from dying away, recent decades have added new layers of possibility to the story. In the 1980s, at least one folklorist from University College in Dublin was excited about the identity of Carbonear's Irish Princess. He argued that an Irish political song from the late 1600s called *Sile Ni Ghadra* (a Gaelic name that can be Anglicized to Sheila NaGeira) could well have come from Sheila's own story and that she was famous not only in Newfoundland, but in Ireland too.

What is certain is that Newfoundland's Sheila NaGeira is a character enduring enough to weather all that historical deconstruction that can throw at her and remain a formidable, if elusive, figure in Newfoundland folklore.

Paul Butler is the author of novels *Stoker's Shadow* and *Easton*, about the life of pirate Peter Easton, published by Flanker Press.

ET CETERA

The Legend of Princess Sheila **by P.J. Wakeham. Creative Publishers, St. John's, 1987.**

Pirates and Outlaws of Canada 1610–1932 **by Harold Horwood and Edward Butts. Doubleday, Toronto, 1984.**

THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

Canadians may be the world's leading abbreviators, the mavens of miniaturization. We are, after all, the inventors of Coles Notes, the Heritage Minute, the 3-Day Novel Contest, and – the highest achievement in the field – Hinterland Who's Who, a series of television spots that reduce all of nature to sixty-second sound bites.

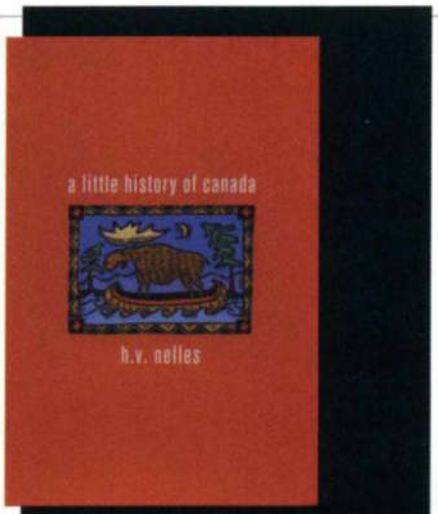
Following in this noble tradition, historian Viv Nelles has thrown all of Canadian history into the dryer and shrunk it down to just 257 pages, plus index. Nelles is an academic historian who has written several fine books, including *The Art of Nation Building*, which won the 2000 Sir John A. Macdonald Prize for best book on Canadian history. He obviously knows his subject.

The Little History takes a brisk jog past all the expected landmarks of our developing nationality: L'Anse aux Meadows, the Plains of Abraham, Queenston Heights, Vimy Ridge, Meech Lake, and Charlottetown. "I have not tried to be comprehensive," Nelles warns us. Fair enough. In a book this "little," many things are going to be left out, and we can argue until next Canada Day about whether they should have been. Certainly Nelles has succeeded in presenting an efficient summary of the economic and political evolution of the country.

Where he is less successful is in making his "little history" enjoyable as well as instructive. It may be short, but it is also dull. There are several reasons for this. First of all, Nelles reveals in his preface that years ago some Japanese students complained to him that "Canadian history had too many names." Unhappily, he took their advice and in his book determined to keep the names to a minimum. The result is that this is a history with the people left out. Aside from most of the prime ministers and a few European explorers, not many actual Canadians are featured in Nelles's narrative. More's the pity. Without people, the narrative tends to become a plod from this treaty to that act to that battle and back again.

It didn't have to be that way. In his treatment of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, Nelles shows himself to be adept at the miniature portrait. He describes "The Chief" with his waggling jowls, his "full rack of prominent teeth," and "his great Cheshire-cat grin." He writes that Diefenbaker was "a raucous, gaudy, exotic bird in a parliamentary aviary of grey sparrows." Unfortunately, none of our other exotic birds inspire Nelles to the same level of descriptive flair.

A second problem with the narrative is that Nelles chooses such a banal theme around which to organize it. "The enduring theme of Canadian history," he writes, "is transformation." Which is another way of saying that the only constant is change. But you can say that about any country. Surely Canada offers more compelling themes to motivate a narrative.



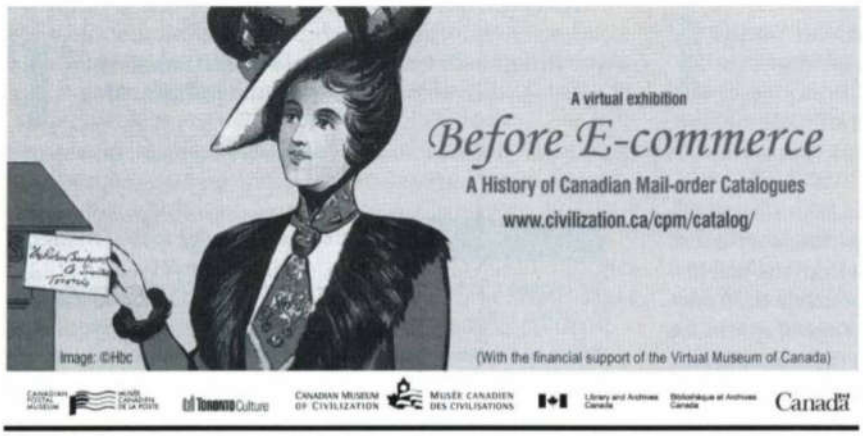
A Little History of Canada
by H.V. Nelles
Oxford University Press, Toronto, 2004
268 pp., $24.95 hardcover

A third problem with the book is its centralist focus. Nelles has not solved the problem of how to incorporate the regional into the national. He recognizes that the country is characterized by "a persistent regionalism," but he does not take the logical next step, which would be to write the regions into the story. For me, a book that includes hardly a word about British Columbia cannot be a book that describes my country.

Lastly, readers should be aware of the relentless political focus of the narrative. *A Little History* is not a history of Canada; it is a history of Canadian politics, especially in the postwar period, as if the exploits of federal politicians are what constitute "history." Too often I was reminded of those awful textbooks that sedated us in high school.

Nelles imagines that the readers of his "Little History" will fall into three categories: the tourist, the new immigrant, and "Canadians in search of a brief introduction to the history of their country." What these imaginary readers will learn from the book is that Canadians are a dull people, obsessed by politics and constitutions, without art, ideas, sport, or literature. I am sure that Professor Nelles does not believe this caricature, but I am afraid that in the process of boiling down our history he has lost its flavour.

Reviewed by **Daniel Francis**, a Vancouver historian.

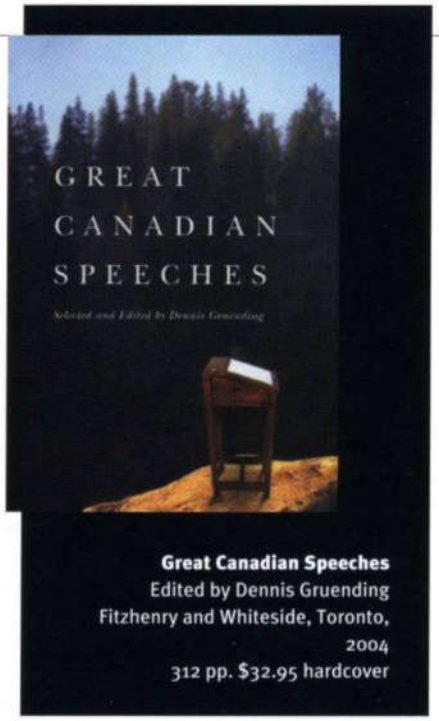


Great Canadian Speeches is precisely what its title suggests. Dennis Gruending, himself a speechwriter and former M.P., has compiled speeches that span Canadian history from 1837 to the present. He includes natives and advocates of rights for women, in addition to the traditional speechifying figure, the male politician. His collection, moreover, includes representatives of the entire Canadian ideological spectrum, from socialists like Tommy Douglas and J.S. Woodsworth to right-wing populists like William Aberhart and Preston Manning. Many of the principal themes of Canadian history are reflected in these speeches: the struggle for Responsible Government, the achievement of Confederation, the extension of suffrage, the creation of a welfare state, and, of course, French-English relations and the Quiet Revolution in Quebec.

Among these themes, this selection brilliantly illustrates the ongoing Canadian debate over the size and function of government. The Great Depression of the 1930s prompted a rethinking of Canada's economic system and an interest in innovative and radical ideas. William Aberhart, for example, embraced the philosophy of social credit. In his speech in this collection, he identified the basic economic problem as "a lack of purchasing power in the hands of the consumers." He proposed to remedy this problem by providing a monthly payment to each citizen "sufficient to purchase the bare necessities of food, clothing, and shelter."

Responding to these pressures, Prime Minister R.B. Bennett gave a speech in 1935 in which he accepted the imperative of economic reform. And reform, he explicitly stated, entailed an expanded role for the state: "Reform means government intervention; it means government control and regulation; it means the end of laissez faire. Reform heralds certain recovery; there can be no permanent recovery without reform. Reform or no reform, I raise that issue squarely."

By the 1980s, however, so-called



Great Canadian Speeches
Edited by Dennis Gruending
Fitzhenry and Whiteside, Toronto, 2004
312 pp. $32.95 hardcover

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neoconservative (more accurately, neoliberal) governments in Britain, the U.S., and Canada began to reconsider government intervention. By 1995, introducing his budget in the House of Commons, Finance Minister Paul Martin said that "we need to redesign the role of the government in the economy." It wasn't an expanded role he was envisioning.

A related theme that has produced oratory is trade policy. Indeed, debate over trade is a leitmotif of Canadian history. Speaking in 1888, writer Goldwin Smith urged the abrogation of all trade barriers between the U.S. and Canada. He sought a commercial union between the two nations, likely leading to Canada's complete integration into the United States. Canada's first prime minister, John A. Macdonald, however, vehemently opposed such a policy. In a famous speech, he exclaimed, "A British subject I was born, a British subject I will die." North American free trade was the primary issue of the 1988 federal election, and Gruending includes the heated exchange between Brian Mulroney and John Turner during the televised leader's debate. As he points out, it is one of the ironies of Canadian history that Mulroney's Conservative government negotiated free trade with the United States, while the Liberal party opposed the agreement – a reversal of the historic positions of each party.

However, in a state as linguistically and culturally divided as Canada, compromise is a necessary aspect of policy – and Canada's leaders recognize it. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien said in 1995 that Canadians "work out our problems through compromise and mutual respect"; Governor General Adrienne Clarkson referred to Canada's "four centuries of give-and-take, compromise and acceptance."

In sum, Gruending has assembled a collection of excellent oratory from which much about Canadian history can be learned.

Reviewed by Winnipeg writer **Graeme Voyer**.

More Books

Fighting for Dignity: The Ginger Goodwin Story. By Roger Stonebanks

Albert (Ginger) Goodwin was a radical subversive to some, hero of the Common Man to others; but in the end it doesn't really matter because the story of his premature demise leaves you with only one concrete conclusion: justice is fallible. *Fighting for Dignity* is neither a who-dunnit nor a how-dunnit, but rather a why-dunnit. Roger Stonebanks provides a detailed context to Goodwin's character starting with his upbringing in bleak industrial England, then describing his experiences as a coal miner on both of Canada's coasts and his later labour activities. He goes on to craft a well-documented, objective approach on the sequence of events that led Goodwin, a union activist and socialist, to escape military conscription and head for the hills where he lost his final battle for the working stiff. Daniel Campbell, acting with authority as a military police officer, shot Goodwin and was subsequently charged and acquitted of manslaughter – but without a public trial. Although considered legally above board at the time, the lack

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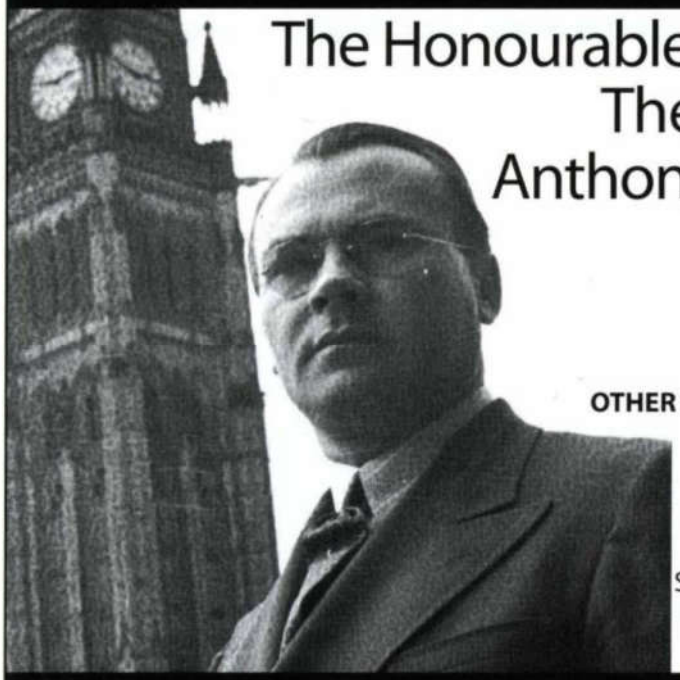

The Honourable Member for Vegreville: The Memoirs and Diary of Anthony Hlynka, M.P. (1940-49)

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of a transparent judicial process created clouds of conspiracy theories that were plumped up by the disappearance and/or blatant destruction of key written records. Stonebanks offers greater insight into the "would-be" trial with a legal analysis of how the trial may have gone (written by Adrian Brooks, a criminal lawyer in Victoria). It all transpires in a less media-savvy world than today and serves as a prime example of the power of perception over actual proof as the mystery continues to linger eighty-five years later, forcing the victim, the accused, and their community at-large to settle for less justice than they deserved.

Canadian Committee on Labour History, St. John's, 2004. 206pp., illus., $26.95 paper

Canada: An Illustrated History. By Derek Hayes

From the prolific and talented author of *Historical Atlas of Canada* and *Historical Atlas of the Arctic* comes another superbly designed volume, this one encompassing the entirety of Canadian history from aboriginals to P.E.T. and beyond. As you might expect, there's the usual suspects – explorers, generals, prime ministers; war, Depression, disaster – but there's also the less usual, such as the bicycle craze, canal building, the twice-collapsed Québec Bridge, and the evolution of capital punishment. But, as with Hayes's other books, the illustrations are the ticket. Among the more than two hundred photographs, fifty paintings, and thirty-five historic maps, there are the must-have iconic images, such the Hudson's Bay Company Charter and the Queen signing the Constitution, but there are also the quirky (the *other* choices for Canada's new flag) and the rarely seen, many of them from the collection – recently acquired by the National Archives of Canada – of Peter Winkworth, who rooted around the English countryside for many years purchasing artwork with Canadian historical themes. Given its size, it's not a book for bedtime, but it is a candidate for coffee tables across the nation.

Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver and Toronto, 2004. 288 pp. $55.00 hardcover

Battle Lines: Eyewitness Accounts from Canada's Military History. By J.L. Granatstein and Norman Hillmer

Peaceable kingdom we may be, but Canada was forged in battle, whether it was England and France duking it out for North American supremacy in the eighteenth century or Canadians loosening their Imperial apron strings in the wars of the twentieth. Hundreds of thousands of men and women have participated in these battles, conflicts, massacres, skirmishes, and disasters, and some of them, somehow, took the time to record their observations and feelings while in the thick of it. Who knows how many journals and letters home from the Plains of Abraham to Kapyong have been lost to time, but enough have landed in Canada's archives and repositories for Carleton University history professor Norman Hillmer and Pierre Berton award-winning author J.L. Granatstein to make a fine selection of the most gripping and the most poignant. In *Battle Lines*, Wolfe's victory over Montcalm, fighting the Fenians in the 1860s, the hellish trenches of World War I, even Canadians' recent experiences in Afghanistan take on an intimacy rarely found in official history.

Thomas Allen Publishers, Toronto, 2004. 490 pp. $39.95 hardcover

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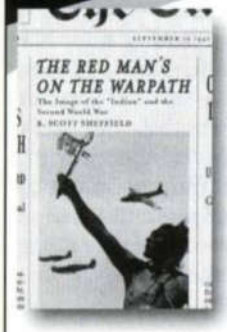

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Christopher Moore

What Happens to a Country Without a Cinema?

This summer we caught Canadian writer-director Ian Iqbal Rashid's comedy film *Touch of Pink* at the local multiplex. Although American Kyle MacLachlan's spot-on star turn as the ghost of Cary Grant generated most of the buzz, *Touch of Pink* offered a cultural-diversity theme that was more Toronto than Hollywood. Alim, the Cary Grant-worshipping hero, is a Canadian working in Britain, and the comedy depends on his self-affirmation. He learns to accept being gay in a straight world. He accepts working in the arts instead of something sensible. He accepts being an Ismaili Muslim in a world where most people aren't.

The only condition Alim (and the film) cannot accept is being from Canada. Alim's imaginary friend Cary Grant mocks him every time Toronto is mentioned, and Alim cringes at being tied to so contemptible a place. *Touch of Pink* is a worthy film, and unlike most Canadian films, it actually got screen time amid the Hollywood blockbusters, but its effort to show sophistication by dissing its own origins seems to typify Canadian cinema.

Mostly we just take it for granted that we don't get to see movies that grow out of Canadian situations. On historical subjects, I could think of occasional exceptions like *Black Robe* and *The Grey Fox*, but the pickings are slim compared to what we expect from Canadian writing, Canadian music, or Canadian painting. When these genres don't hide where they are from, why does Canadian film mostly strive to be so international – meaning from somewhere else?

Thinking about the absence of Canadian history from our cinema, I called George Melnyk, who has just published *One Hundred Years of Canadian Cinema*, the first overview history of the long struggle of Canadian cinema.

George Melnyk

Melnyk is prepared to venture that "we have a maturing cinema history" in Canada. It has always been hard to sustain a film industry in Canada, and yet Canadians have kept trying. Melnyk describes the efforts of early filmmakers in such places as Brandon, Calgary, Trenton, and Montreal before 1920. (In another recent book, *A Century of Canadian Cinema*, critic Gerald Pratley reviews *two thousand* twentieth-century Canadian films.) Melnyk places himself with "those who value the feature film as an expression of creative identity," so he concludes that the National Film Board's documentary tradition became a "barrier to the evolution of the Canadian film industry." Canadian cinema, he says, "did really not get going until the 1970s, while in some countries film has been going strong for a hundred years." But amid the expanded production and improved quality of recent decades, Melnyk sees the elements of a distinctive Canadian cinema emerging.

Melnyk observes that the difficulty of making careers in feature film here means most Canadians in the field are "auteurs," writer-directors creating from personal vision. With personal stories driving so much Canadian filmmaking, our films are that much less likely to engage in historical themes or historical storytelling (one spectacular exception: Zacharias Kunuk's *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*).

A larger problem is what Melnyk calls the absent audience. In English Canada, he says, Canadian films get about 1 per cent of the available screen time. "Compare that to the huge audience for Canadian music, writing, and so on." About fifteen features are made in English Canada each year, "and maybe one or two get shown in art house cinemas. No audience means no films, which means no audience. It's a vicious circle." There's often a larger audience outside Canada; no wonder filmmakers seek respect elsewhere.

George Melnyk studies film as an art form, seeking instances of great films and distinctive styles of filmmaking. (And he emphasizes the plural, stressing the many distinctions within English Canadian film, let alone between English Canada and Quebec). But cinema is also an industry, perhaps more than any other art form. Even more than other arts, film needs a sustainable, income-making industrial base as a precursor to sustained aesthetic achievement and the expression of national themes.

Much of the filmmaking activity in Canada is still the runaway American kind, providing work for actors and crews but no Canadian films. Vancouver in particular has been very successful in attracting American productions, but Melnyk suspects that may be why we have not seen a Vancouver director portraying his hometown on film as Win-

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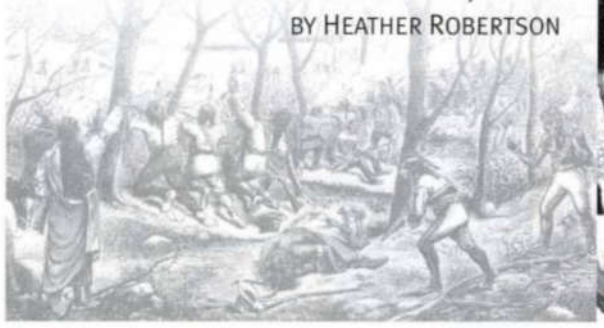


nipegger Guy Maddin, Toronto's Atom Egoyan, or Montreal's Denys Arcand have done for their cities.

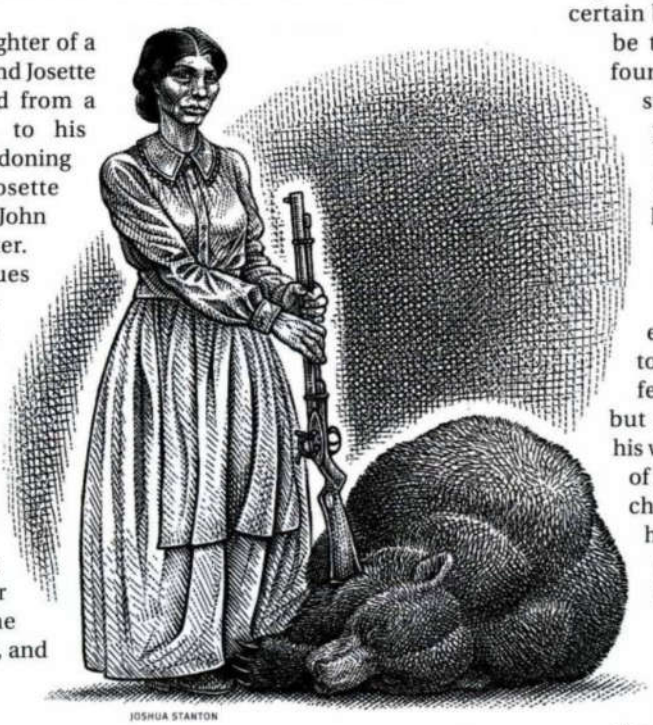
Would we start to see more Canadian films if the rising Canadian dollar and Arnold Schwarzenegger's campaign against "runaway productions" drove Hollywood North to start making its own films? Melnyk suspects that despite the ups and downs, the Americanized productions will survive. He's equally skeptical of a theory floated in Peter Rowe's recent and lively documentary about Canadian film, "Popcorn With Maple Syrup," that the infamous "tax shelter" era of the 1970s, for all the waste and dreck it produced, at least started the critical mass a film industry needs. Melnyk prefers the Telefilm funding system of the 1990s. "If you compare the 1970s with the 1990s, I can assure you that you got ten times the quality in the 1990s. ... In the end, the tax-shelter era meant big losses to taxpayers, without the quality coming back in return."

Melnyk quotes Fellini as saying "two things always look good in a film – a train and snow." We have mostly lost the trains, but we still have the snow. Can Canadian filmmaking hope for a future brighter than its past? "Canadian cinema has always struggled against the American tide that engulfs film in Canada," Melnyk writes in *One Hundred Years of Canadian Cinema*. Unless the vicious cycle of the absent audience is overcome, cinema may continue to be a poor relation among Canadian art forms.

Does it matter? "Is cinema as an art form something that forms public consciousness?" muses Melnyk. "Yes, we know that it is. For example, we know that the [American] films of the twentieth century have been fundamental to how the United States sees itself. So what happens when you don't have a cinema? Do we lessen ourselves? Or is it irrelevant?" ◘

George Melnyk's *One Hundred Years of Canadian Cinema* is published by University of Toronto Press. Gerald Pratley's *A Century of Canadian Film* is published by Lynx Images. "Popcorn and Maple Syrup: Canadian Film from Eh to Zed," produced by Peter Rowe Productions, was broadcast on CBC Television in November 2004.

A fur trader's wife, the spirited MARY MCKENZIE is revealed through her husband's journals. Still, Judith Hudson Beattie wonders what she might have told us in her own words.



JOSHUA STANTON

Mary McKenzie was the daughter of a Nor'Wester, William McKay, and Josette Latour, probably descended from a voyageur. William retired to his native Scotland in 1807, abandoning Josette and his children. Josette soon found a replacement in John Haldane, another Nor'Wester. Although one of his colleagues later recalled that "her presence at Rat Portage [now Kenora, Ontario] probably saved his scalp," in 1822 he, too, left her when he retired to Scotland.

Her daughter's experience was very different. While still in her teens, Mary McKay had married Charles McKenzie, twenty years her senior. He had entered the North West Company in 1803, and after 1807 had been clerk in charge at Lac Seul, north of Lake Superior. In 1823, Charles retired to Montreal. He soon reentered the Hudson's Bay Company, and after one year's posting on the St. Lawrence River, the family returned to Lac Seul in 1825. The move meant leaving behind two school-aged daughters they would never see again; two younger children accompanied their parents. The situation, while far from ideal for Charles McKenzie and his career prospects, suited Mary's lifestyle perfectly.

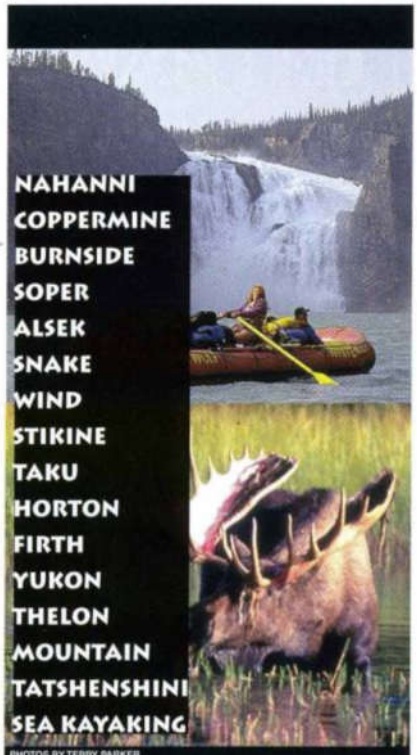
In her husband's journals, reports abound of Mary's prowess at goose hunting, and her catches of beaver, otter, and wolverine. Charles defensively claimed "she hunts for her own pleasure, & tho' I pay her, as I would an Indian out of the Company's shop – she wastes more in wear and tear than she gets & the only profit I see by it is that she keeps herself in employment and her body in health." As the years passed and Charles remained at the rank of clerk in this minor post, he boasted more openly about his wife's triumphs, recording the 300 to 600 rabbits she snared on her annual ten-day hunts, and her frequent catches of fox, lynx, and even bear. He also revealed his affection with terms such as "the guid wife," "our rib," or "the better half."

Once Mary killed a huge bear and Charles decided to stuff and preserve the unusual specimen. Against Mary's advice, he followed instructions from the Keeper of the Royal Museum. When all the bear's hair fell off, he wrote: "Mrs McK set me down for what I willingly own I am in the matter of Bears, at least, because I would not follow her counsel. She now vows She shall skin every Bear she may kill before she brings them to the House[.]" When she was in her mid-fifties, he described her as: "brisk as a Bee – She must take her hunting exercise. ... She snared upwards of 600 Rabbits this winter merely to give them to the people whose wives do not set a snare."

In the summer of 1844, Mary was left in charge of the store while Charles reported to headquarters at Albany. This was the first of several such occasions, and Charles reported on his return: "I was not afraid that she would neglect any thing but I was not very certain but that some Indians would be troublesome to her." But he found that she had managed the stock admirably. He found the post in better shape than when he left. The next year she added nurse to her storekeeper's duties during a year of influenza, whooping cough, and measles epidemics.

When Charles was considering retirement, he hesitated to join his son at Red River. He feared the high cost of living, but of even greater concern was his wife's loss of her regular outlets of hunting and fishing and how a change in diet might affect her health: "Nothing but the simple Indian fare for her, cooked in the simplest way – boiled fish & potatoes, no spices, but a little salt, of course." However, by 1854 his poor health forced them to leave the north. He had written to his son in May 1854: "I have to thank the Goodness of God that your mother keeps her usual good health. ... I would be the most miserable being without her." He was not forced to bear that great misery: he died on March 6, 1855, less than a year after retiring. In 1870, Mary was living with her son Hector Aeneas and his wife in St. James, west of the Red River along the Assiniboine. She survived Charles by more than three decades, dying on October 4, 1886, at the age of ninety. Though her health was apparently not adversely affected, I wonder how she coped with her new life. I wish she had recorded her impressions: no doubt they would have been as spirited and feisty as the capable and adaptable woman herself. Once her husband wrote: "Tho' I mention her hunt I do not mention her 'sayings'." How I wish he had recorded her words more often!

Judith Hudson Beattie, former Keeper of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, now researches, broadcasts, and writes in Winnipeg.



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DAREDEVILS

History has recorded the names and deeds of many of Niagara's daredevils. When our family lived in Niagara Falls, I got to know two of them personally. Our residence, just down the street from historic Lundy's Lane, was the Drummond Apartments on Ferry Street. It was there, when I was a teenager, that I met Jean Lussier. His apartment was two stories above ours.

Lussier had gone over Canada's Horseshoe Falls in an orange rubber ball on July 4, 1928, and was still, a few years later, trying to make a living from having performed that stunt.

He showed me his scrapbooks: two huge volumes filled with newspaper clippings of his daredevil exploits. One picture that greatly impressed me was of Lussier hurling himself off the highest building in Boston using a pair of wings he designed. He simply glided to earth. According to the clipping, he did it twice.

Lussier had his rubber ball on display at Falls View. There, for a price, he allowed tourists to have their picture taken with him, with the orange ball in the background. Lussier could never decide whether he made more money on the Canadian side or the American side. Being an American citizen, he finally moved to Niagara Falls, New York, to stay.

The other daredevil I met was William "Red" Hill, the famous river man. When he entered his steel barrel and took it through the rapids in 1930, my chums and I were there to see it. We watched as the barrel shot through the water at an estimated speed of sixty kilometres an hour. There were times when it shot six metres or more into the air. When it splashed down, it disappeared under the water, only to reappear downstream, shooting into the air again.

When the barrel reached the whirlpool, it circled slowly, alternately pushed near the shore then sucked back into the vortex. During the quiet times, Hill opened a hatch and peered out and waved a paddle at the onlookers.

We boys quickly made our way to the shore of the whirlpool. We were there when one of Hill's sons, wearing a bathing suit, tied a long rope around his waist, and swam out and grasped the river man's outthrust hand as the barrel drifted by. How gladly Hill held on to his son and hugged him. Several men pulled them and the barrel ashore.

NIAGARA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY / EDDIE HODGE, PHOTOGRAPHER

Red Hill (centre), famous for successfully navigating the Niagara rapids several times, is also known for saving dozens of people from drowning and for recovering more than 150 bodies. Jean Lussier (right) went over the falls in a rubber ball. He later sold small pieces of it for fifty cents each. The man on the left is unidentified.

While standing nearby, I heard one of the men say, "Red, didn't I see you starting to take your clothes off?" Hill replied, "Yes! The barrel was starting to leak and I was going to swim for it the next time around. I knew it would sink if I waited any longer!"

It was after that daredevil stunt that

I met Red Hill. He was a personal friend of Bill Burridge, my father's brother. The meeting took place one summer evening when my uncle, father, my sister Beatrice, and I made a call on the Hill home.

Hill was out on the front lawn with his barrel. Next to Hill's barrel was the one-ton oak and steel bumper barrel that the Greek, George Stathakis, took over the falls in 1930. Riding with him was his 105-year-old turtle named Sonny Boy. Because the barrel was so heavy, it was trapped under the falls for fourteen hours, and water leaked into it. The man did not survive. The turtle did.

Hill allowed Beatrice and I to peek inside the barrel and see the turtle. Then we were given the privilege of crawling inside Hill's barrel to inspect it. Visitors had to pay a fee to have their pictures taken with Hill and the barrel, but we had our inspection free.

A few months later, we boys were swimming in the river at the foot of Ellis Street. This was an area above the rapids, where the river had developed a backtow. We swam there often. We were getting dressed when I heard a man's voice behind me, "Why are you getting dressed? Why don't you swim out there and get that body?"

I turned around and there stood Red Hill. I asked, "What body?" "That body," he replied as he pointed it out to me, a body floating in the water near the American shore. He had spotted it near the falls and had followed its progress as he trod the Canadian shore. He later recovered a woman's body from the whirlpool.

As for swimming across the river, defying the currents, bringing the body to the Canadian side of the river – at sixteen years of age – I wasn't remotely interested. I'm no daredevil.

By Cecil E. Burridge, a retired minister living in Barrie, Ontario.

Have you had a personal experience with the great characters or momentous events of Canadian history? If you would like to submit a story for possible publication, send it to <editors@historysociety.ca> with YourStory in the subject line, or write to Your Story, c/o The *Beaver*, 478-167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0T6. For further information please see our editorial guidelines at <www.thebeaver.ca>.

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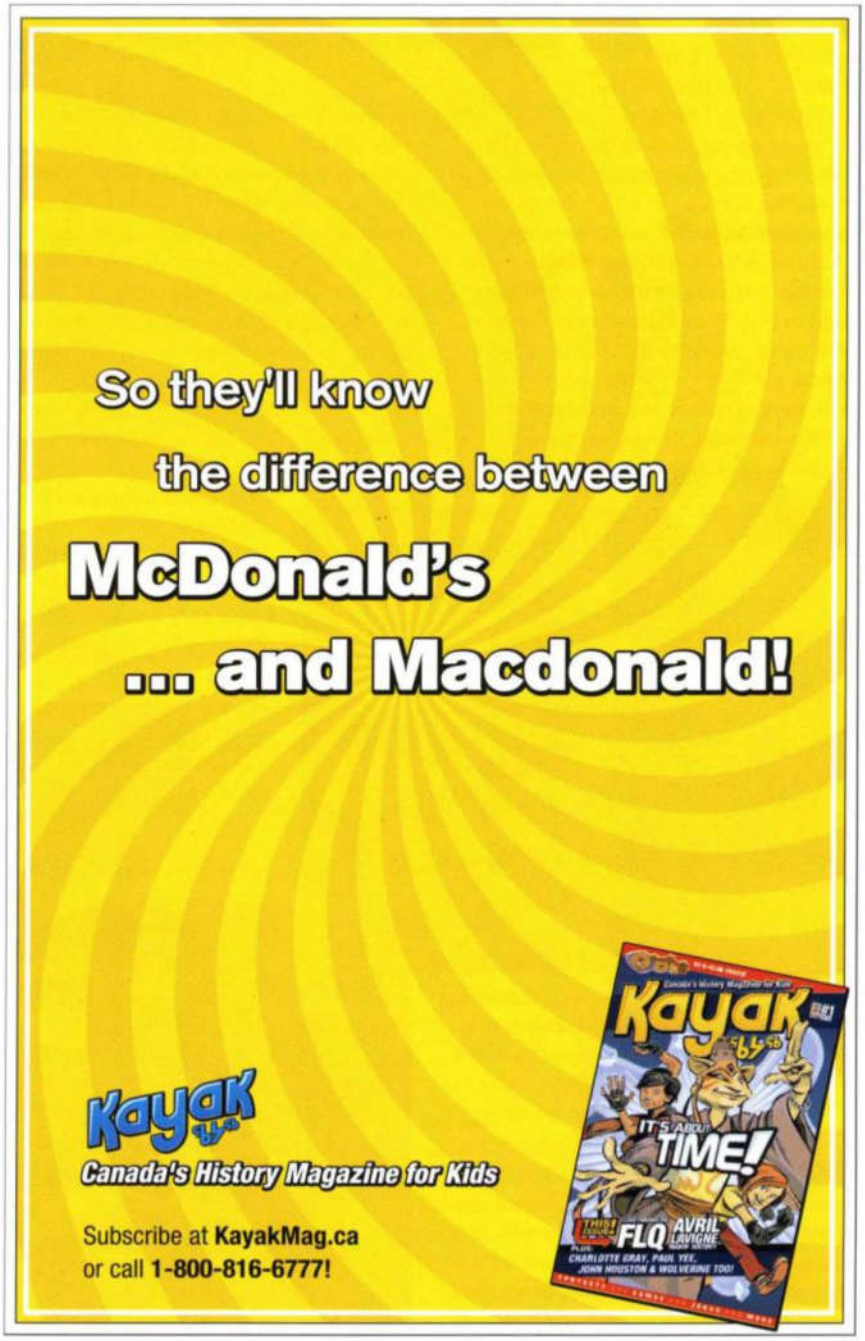
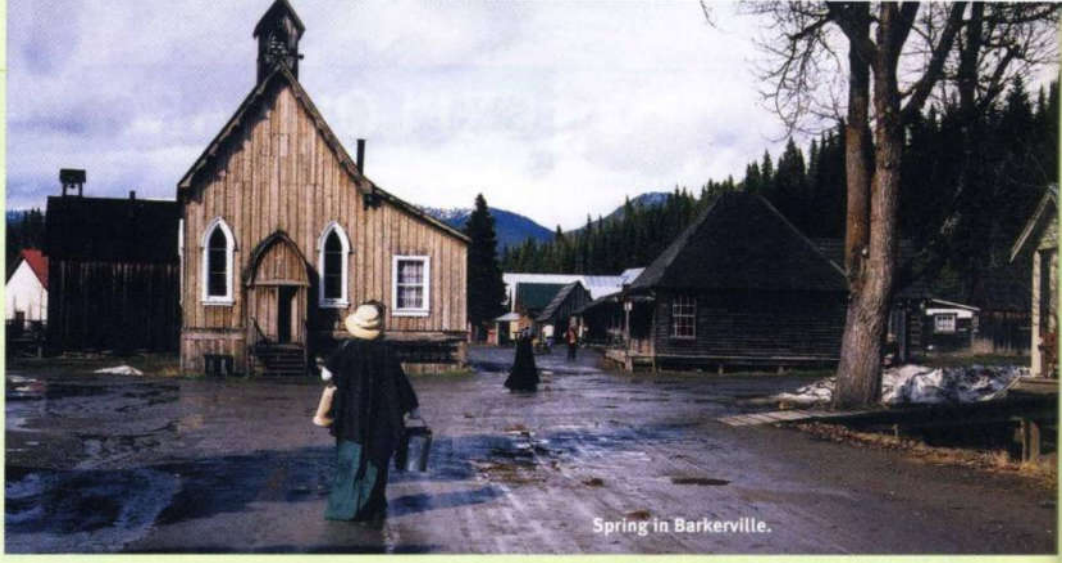


ALL THAT GLITTERS

Barbara Huck travels the B.C. highways that gold fever built.


Spring in Barkerville.

Gold has sung its siren song for 6,000 years, but in North America its magnetic lure has done more than adorn heads and hands or swell bank accounts. Here, gold sparked the settlement of the West.

Many are familiar with the story of the glitter in the trail-race of John Sutter's California sawmill in 1849, but British Columbia's gold rush is less well known. James Houston, a Scottish ne'er-do-well, is credited with the first find, in a creek northwest of Fort Kamloops in 1857. Soon Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor James Douglas had obtained a sample and sent it off to the San Francisco mint, alerting miners who were cooling their heels in California. By April 1858, nearly 30,000 had descended on southern B.C.

PETER ST. JOHN

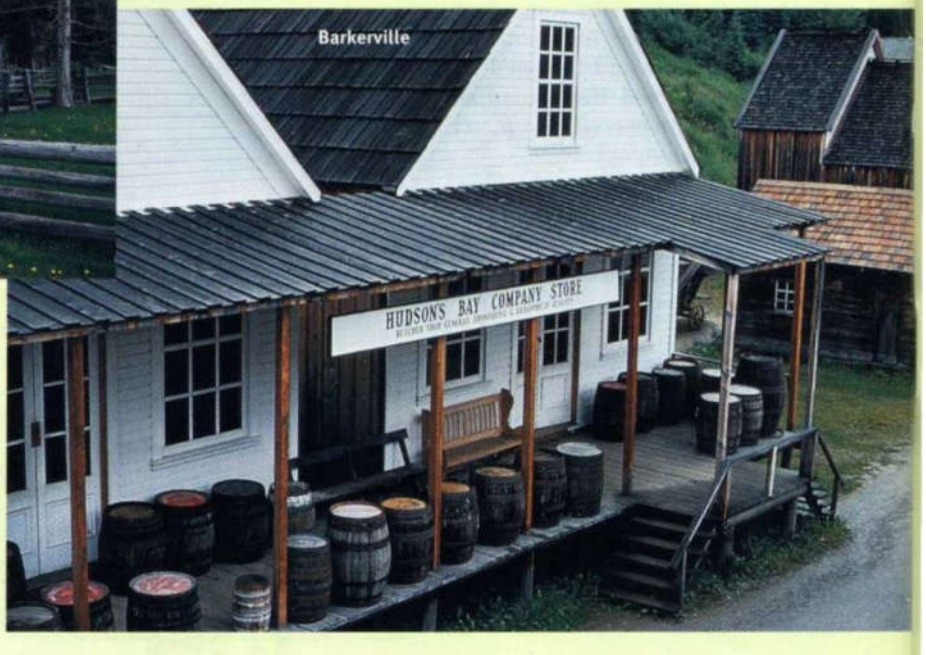
Constructed between 1864 and 1865, Cottonwood House (above) was a road house between Quesnel and Barkerville where horses were changed, meals served, and provisions sold.

A year later, gold was discovered on a gravel bar in the Fraser River just south of Fort Yale, 125 kilometres east of present-day Vancouver. Dubbed "Hill's Bar" after the lucky prospector Edward Hill, the find turned tiny Yale, which hitherto had boasted one "public eating house," into an instant city. Suddenly, there were hotels and restaurants along the river and houses on the hill. A half-million dollars in gold poured out, and soon prospectors were again looking north. Today, Yale is quiet again, but there are reminders of that brief flurry in the Yale Museum, where river tours and gold panning are featured.

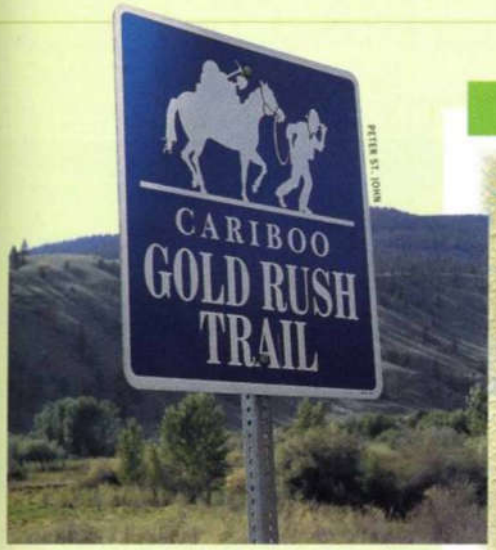
In 1860, it was the turn of Lillooet, 131 kilometres up the Fraser from Yale. With thirteen saloons and a clutter of cabins, it (briefly) boasted twenty-three camels imported to pack gold, as well as the largest population of miners working the Fraser's shifting sand bars. But everyone knew the mother lode was upstream. In 1862, Billy Barker found it on upper Williams Creek, sixty-six kilometres east of Quesnel on the western slopes of the Cariboo Mountains, and the rush was on.

Anxious to control thousands of Americans gathering below Fraser Canyon, James Douglas, now governor, took charge and ordered a route hacked out of the daunting landscape along the Fraser and Thompson Rivers. Between 1862 and 1864, hundreds of labourers turned 640 kilometres of unforgiving terrain into the Cariboo Wagon Road, dubbed "the eighth wonder of the world." Today's Cariboo Highway traces the route.

Along the way, one community after another – Clinton (the "Gateway to the Cariboo"), 70 Mile House, and 100 Mile House among them – sprang up to serve the prospectors. Says retired Clinton carpenter Mike Brundage: "The only gold in Clinton was fool's gold, but the hotel proprietors and men



Barkerville



PETER ST. JOHN

who mended their wagons and farriers who shod their horses may have been the only ones who really made any money.

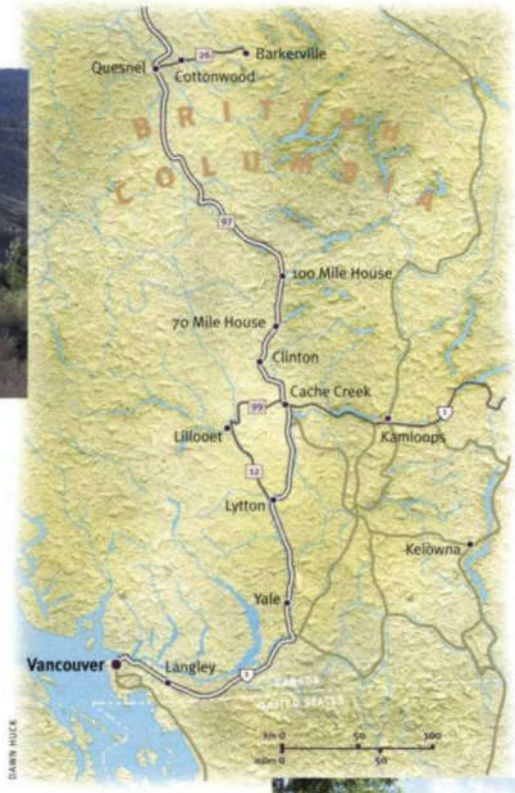
Tiny Williams Creek was soon swamped as more than 100,000 people poured over the road. Renamed Barkerville, it quickly outstripped all others in size and sophistication. Along with saloons and hotels, the creekside community boasted churches, a bakery, blacksmith, general store, schoolhouse and doctor's office, as well as a bootmaker, tin shop, library, and a large Chinatown.

Barkerville has stood the test of time. Every building listed above still exists, and many more, including hotels, restaurants, B&Bs, and gift shops, have been recreated and operate as thriving heritage businesses. In today's Barkerville, you can pan for gold, buy period clothing, stock up on freshly-baked sourdough bread, purchase handmade Chinese gifts, take a stagecoach ride, attend the theatre, dine out all day long, and sleep in one of the most beautifully restored communities in North America. Strolling the boardwalks above the authentically unpaved streets, you're likely to meet "Judge Begbie," or stepping through the open door of the schoolhouse, "Mrs. Thompson", the town's popular teacher. En route, Cottonwood House, just east of Quesnel, offers tours and gold panning.

But if Barkerville is *the* destination, reminders of this turbulent period begin far afield, for signs indicating the Cariboo Trail can be seen as far south as central Washington State.

Barbara Huck is the author of *Exploring the Fur Trade Routes of North America* and *In Search of Ancient Alberta*. She lives in Winnipeg.

IF YOU GO ...



DAWN HUCK

THE GOLD RUSH TRAIL, a barely passable track in the nineteenth century, is today a scenic route that extends from Fort Langley, forty kilometres east of Vancouver, north to Cache Creek along Highway 1, Cache Creek to Quesnel along Highway 97, then east down Highway 26 to Barkerville. To reach Lillooet, take Highway 12 at Lytton.

For information on places to see, accommodations, and special events contact:

Tourism British Columbia
T: 1-800-HELLO BC
W: www.HelloBC.ca

Gold Rush Trail
T: 1-888-430-3339
W: www.goldrushtrail.net

Some sites included in this article are open on a seasonal basis. For further information contact:

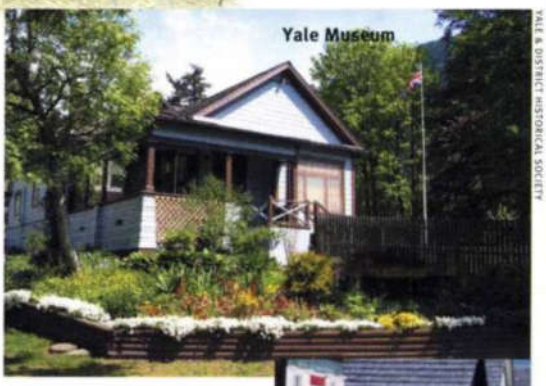
Barkerville Historic Town
Box 19
Barkerville, B.C. V0K 1B0
T: (250) 994-3332
E: barkerville@sbtc.gov.bc.ca
W: www.heritage.gov.bc.ca/bark/bark.htm

Cottonwood House Historic Site
c/o 241 Kinchant Street
Quesnel, B.C. V2J 2R3
T: (250) 992-2071
E: cottonwoodhouse@sd28.bc.ca
W: www.cottonwoodhouse.ca

Yale Museum and Historic Church
7 Douglas Street
Yale, B.C. V0K 2S0
T: (604) 863-2324

South Cariboo Historical Museum
Box 217
Clinton, B.C. V0K 1K0
T: (250) 459-2442
E: clintonmuseum@goldtrail.com

Lillooet Museum and Visitor Info Centre
790 Main Street
Lillooet, B.C. V0K 1V0
T: (250) 256-4308
E: lillmuseum@cablelan.net



YALE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TOURISM B.C.

Costumed interpreters bring the nineteenth century in Barkerville to life.

Jack Granatstein, "a driving force"

Jack Granatstein was born in Toronto in 1939. He attended Toronto public schools, Le Collège Militaire Royal de St-Jean, the Royal Military College, Kingston (B.A., 1961), the University of Toronto (M.A., 1962), and Duke University (PhD., 1966). He served in the Canadian Army (1956–1966), then joined the History Department at York University, Toronto (1966–1995) where, since taking early retirement in 1995, he is Distinguished Research Professor of History Emeritus. He served as the director and CEO of the Canadian War Museum from 1998 to 2001. Granatstein has held the Canada Council's Killam senior fellowship twice, was editor of the *Canadian Historical Review* (1981–1984), and is a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He is a member of the Royal Military College of Canada Board of Governors. He is an officer of the Order of Canada (1997).

His areas of research include twentieth-century Canadian history – foreign and defence policy, Canadian-American relations, the military, the public service, and politics.

He has authored over forty scholarly and popular books including *Hell's Corner: An Illustrated History of Canada's Great War, 1914–1918.*

AWARD WINNER

Tenth Pierre Berton Award dinner the toast of Toronto

More than 150 *Beaver* readers, History Society patrons, and noted historians and writers bunked in for an evening at Historic Fort York on November 25 to pay tribute to Jack Granatstein, the 2004 recipient of the Pierre Berton Award for excellence in popularizing Canadian history.

Jack Granatstein (centre) with CNHS board chair Jim Arnett (right) and board member Eric Jackman.

Just days before his passing, Mr. Berton, unable to attend due to illness, conveyed his congratulations in a message delivered by long-time business associate, Elsa Franklin: "For years there have been two kinds of historians; scholarly academics who assess the significance of our history and popular narrative historians who are basically storytellers. The significant thing about tonight's award winner Jack Granatstein is that he crosses the line between scholarly history and popular history. This is a considerable achievement and it's a pleasure to include him in the short but distinguished company of Pierre Berton History Award winners."

History Society Chairman James Arnett presented the award noting "Jack has educated Canadians for decades on the country's politics, foreign relations, and military history. Intensely passionate about Canada's military achievements in the first half of the twentieth century, as director and CEO, he was also a driving force behind the construction of the new Canadian War Museum in Ottawa."

Excerpts from Jack Granatstein's acceptance speech

"... it is important to say straight out what I never did quite as fulsomely as I should have: that Pierre Berton brought history to life for Canadians. No one has done more to stop the death through neglect and boredom of the Canadian past than Pierre Berton. And it is a great honour to win an award named after him ... .

"I think of myself as a national historian, because I write on big national subjects – war, the military, Canadian politics, foreign policy, Canada-U.S. relations. They are vital subjects to us, but most outside academe would be surprised, I think, to realize these are not subjects the vast majority of Canadian historians write about ... .

"The big stories, as Pierre Berton understood, can be national in scope and reach everyone. We need the local and specialized histories, of course, and there is no shortage of them. But we desperately need the big national histories, too ... .

"To me, Canada's big stories are too important to be left only to Pierre Berton's books. University historians need to be read more widely – and for that to happen they must write more clearly and broaden the subjects they write about. They need to connect with the public. They need to realize there is no sin in being read.

"That was always my goal, for I could see no reason to write if only three specialists read my work. If I had views on our past – and present and future – and I did – I wanted them to reach the widest possible audience. ...

"So I am very pleased to receive this award for popular Canadian history. It tells me that I did the right thing in trying to reach a wider audience in my role as a historian."

The complete text of Jack Granatstein's acceptance speech is available on the History Society website at <www.historysociety.ca>.

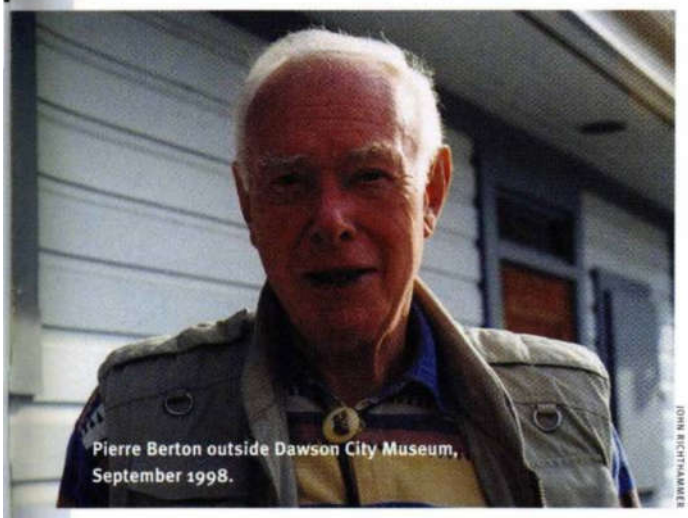
Pierre Berton: A great Canadian

Pierre Berton was our champion. He was a brilliant journalist, writer, and passionate advocate for ideas. And he chose Canada's history as his avocation.

For over fifty years, Pierre Berton devoted his extraordinary storytelling talents to bringing Canadian history to life. In an era when society's priority was to look to the future instead of the past, Pierre Berton was always there with a new character, a new voyage into the past that reminded us that there was much to be learned from where we had just come.

Ten years ago, when Canada's National History Society was established, our first initiative was to establish a national award for outstanding achievement in popularizing Canadian history. The decision to confirm Pierre Berton as the first recipient was swift and unanimous.

What was unexpected, however, was the magnanimity and generosity of spirit that Pierre Berton would provide to the History Society in its first decade and up to these last few months. Pierre graciously accepted to be our patron for our first award and to permit it to carry his name. He has been a steadfast supporter of the Society.



Pierre Berton outside Dawson City Museum, September 1998.

JOHN RICHTAMMER

Over the past ten years we have honoured a broad range of Canadian writers, broadcasters, private foundations, and professional associations. They all share his passion and devotion to bringing our stories to a wider audience. Pierre was there to celebrate the sharing of our stories each and every year. Each year, except this past one.

Pierre Berton is irreplaceable. We feel a profound obligation in our continuing role to honour his legacy through the Pierre Berton Award program, celebrating the champions of Canadian history, who like him, demonstrate an exceptional passion and dedication to telling Canada's story for this generation, and for the generations yet to be.

Donations to the Pierre Berton Award program may be made to:

Canada's National History Society
478–167 Lombard Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0T6
T: (204) 988-9300
E: info@historysociety.ca

A book full of winners

The History Society announced plans to publish a special trade paperback book in partnership with Random House / Doubleday to mark the tenth anniversary of the Pierre Berton Award. Due for release in fall 2005, the book will feature the contributed works of all ten Pierre Berton Award recipients. Proceeds from the sale of the book will be directed to support the continuation of the History Society's Pierre Berton Award program.

Columnist Christopher Moore interviewed Pierre Berton for the August/September 1994 edition of the *Beaver*. The excerpt that follows illuminates Berton's unique contributions to telling Canada's story:

In 1970, [Pierre Berton] published The National Dream, *the first of his two-book narrative on the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The railway books changed his life – and ours. He was fifty. His important work had just begun. …*

Journalism … told Berton what kind of book he wanted to write. "I don't call what I do popular history because there is academic history that is popular and nonacademic history that no one reads. I call it narrative history. When I started no one in Canada was writing this kind of history. The only exception was Bruce Hutchison." Berton, famed as a journalist for his ability to spot the big story, then get the facts and lay them out in clear vivid prose, planned to apply the same qualities to narrative history. … "I make nothing up. I don't need to make up the weather, or the time, or someone's thoughts, when there are sources to tell." …

The archival work that provides that kind of detail – the work that also turned up Edward Mallandaine and put a name to the boy who squeezed into the famous Last Spike photograph – is what underpins Berton's historical narrative style, and it has hardly changed since the railway books. … Berton thinks the time was right for the new kind of history he was providing: Centennial year had whetted Canadians' interest in Canada. In any case, the books met instant acceptance and extraordinary sales. … Soon came the television version. That sold more books, and really the demand never ceased. Berton had created an audience, and he and his audience have gone on together ever since. The success of The National Dream *made him a historian, and … changed the landscape of Canadian historical writing.*

Anne Rector, who submitted this photograph to the *Beaver*, is Emma Catherine Rector's granddaughter. She lives in Belleville, Ontario. The damaged Handley Page spent three months in Parrsboro being repaired before flying off to New York on October 9. In Parrsboro, summer 1919 was forever known as the "Handley Page Summer."

Tail Emma Catherine Rector, née McKinnon, was from a family of means in Springhill, Nova Scotia. An independent sort, she ranged about the Chignecto Peninsula with her friends; an avid photographer, she often took her camera with her. While an artist with a discerning eye can always make something extraordinary out of the ordinary, occasionally something extraordinary drops from the heavens. Literally, in the case of the Handley Page V/1500 biplane that made a forced landing in nearby Parrsboro on Saturday, July 5, 1919, while en route to New York from Harbour Grace, Newfoundland. The fabric-covered, spruce-frame aeroplane was colossal – each wingspan was 125 feet, longer than that of a Boeing 727. When it came down in Parrsboro, it tore through fences, crushed its right wing against a tree, and came to rest with its tail in the air. What photographer would not rush to capture this massive and alien cruciform against the summer sky? ◘

Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in our country's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied at your local photo shop (please don't send priceless originals) and send it to: Album, c/o *The Beaver*, #478–167 Lombard Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0T6. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your copy returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

tvo

From the Dream to the Mountaintop

TVO commemorates Black History Month with Citizen King, a two-part examination of the last five years in the life of Martin Luther King.

Mondays at 10 pm, February 7 and 14.

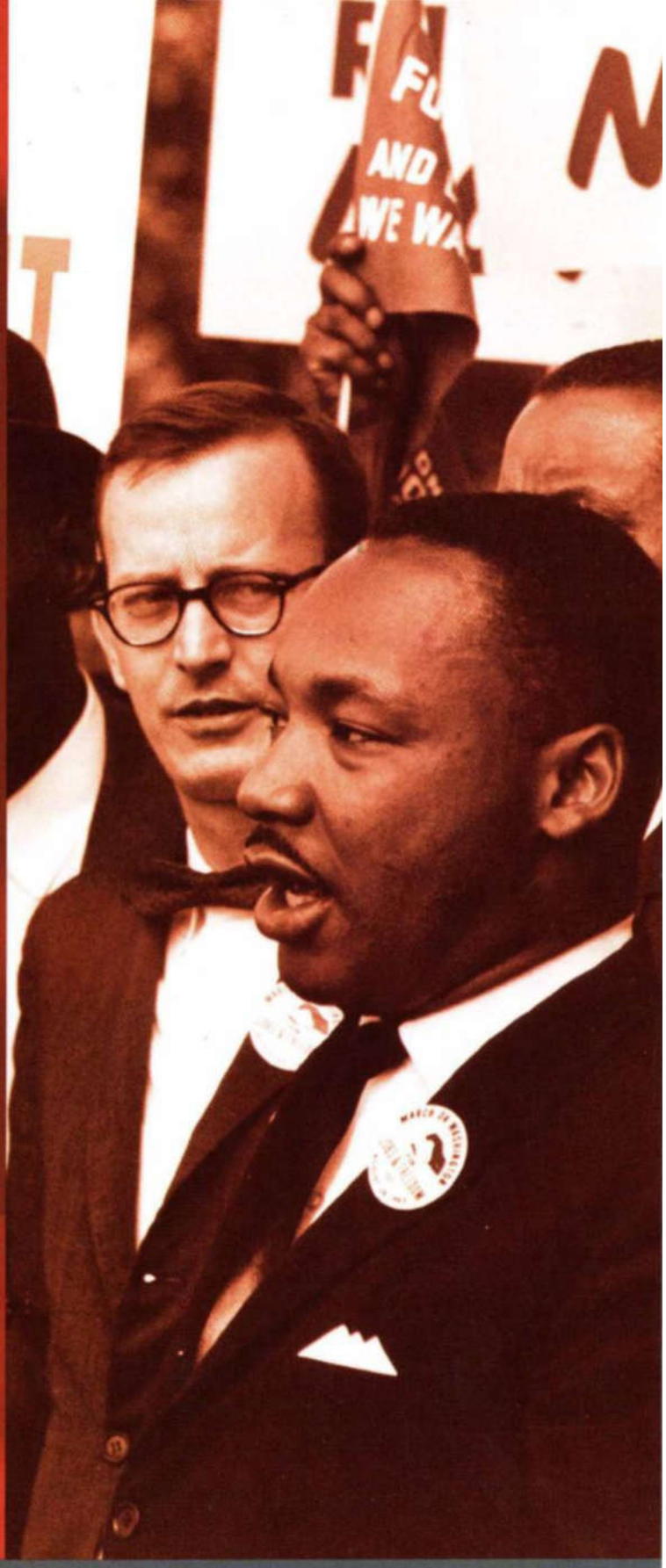
Also this winter:

First Scientists
Studying ancient Aboriginal science and technology for modern applications.
February 21 at 10 pm, and March 14 at 7 pm.

War of 1812
Retelling the story of a critical period in North American history.
Mondays at 7 pm March 21 to April 11.

Conquering Niagara: The Story of the Welland Canal
The history of a vital waterway.
March 7 at 7 pm

tvo.org



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